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TALES FROM



BLACKWOOD



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Blackwood's Magazine

T A L E S

FROM

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TALES FROM "BLACKWOOD."

GUY NEVILLE'S GHOST.

BY PERCY GREG.

[MAGA. MARCH 1865.]

NO: I have met plenty of ghost-seers, and have heard them tell their stories with a sincerity of awe and a shuddering recollection of the terror past that left no sort of doubt as to their belief. And history assures me that, ever since the days of Homer, and perhaps before then, ghosts have from time to time been seen of men, and have made the hair of the seers stand on end, and their blood curdle with fear. But I never saw a ghost myself, except once. And then? Yes; then I must do the ghost the justice to say that I was horribly frightened.

I was very glad to accept Charlie Neville's invitation to pass a few days with him in the cottage

liest scenery in England. Thus, through scene after scene of romantic grandeur or subdued and quiet beauty, we reached the valley, at the other end of which the windows of Neville Grange flashed back the golden light of the sun that was sinking behind the western mountains.

"That is my home," said Charlie, as I gazed in silence on a building well suited to the glorious landscape around. "It is small, as you see: it has been very much larger. The ruins of what in the olden days was Neville Grange lie on the other side of the cottage, which my great-grandfather built on part of the old site. Our present abode is so small that, with our large family, it requires some close packing to take in the few guests whom we can persuade to relieve our solitude. Relief it is, for there is no other gentleman within a dozen miles, except the curate."

"Is that the curate?" I asked, pointing to an elegant figure which, in a sporting costume, and with his back turned to us, was climbing at some little distance a steep path which led to a little farmhouse, the residence of one of the poorer of those "statesmen" who are the pride of the English Highlands. "I think even your fastidious eyes will admit him to have the air of a gentleman."

"No; that is not the curate. That is Crosthwaite's house. His family have held that farm longer than history runs back—probably in the

days of Alfred. I don't know who the man is—some tourist, I suppose. It has a look of Guy Monthermer, my cousin; but Monthermer is with his regiment in India, and, if he were not, he would hardly come so near us."

I remembered that there had been a fierce quarrel between Guy Monthermer and Charlie's father, who was Monthermer's guardian. Guy was a few years senior to Charlie, but very young at the time of the quarrel. He had been foolish enough to make the feud public by challenging his relative, but had, of course, been met with a contemptuous refusal. Thus much I knew; but I did not know then, nor do I know now, the exact merits of the quarrel, or the demerits of Guy Monthermer. I can only tell my readers that he distinguished himself in India alike by his courage and his insubordination; that, some years after the date of my visit to Neville Grange, he engaged in the Garibaldian expedition; and—what may be gleaned from these pages. I knew then only enough to let my companion's remark pass unanswered. He looked for some time after the stranger, who, however, was too distant for recognition.

We reached Neville Grange, and were greeted with hearty welcome by two boys and three little girls, the junior branches of the house, who had rushed out to meet their brother at the door. Without going into the drawing-room, Charles un-

dertook to show me up-stairs ; and for this, remembering Cæsar's opinion of my travelling suit, I was not ungrateful. The part of the cottage into which I was introduced was clearly of old date. The oak flooring was perfectly black ; it had become irregular in its level from the gradual "settling" of the walls, and it was broken at uncertain intervals by capricious steps. The walls were panelled with dark old oak ; the doors were of the same material, with old-fashioned latches in place of hidden locks and rounded handles. One of these Charles opened. Two downward steps led into a small room, oak-floored, with scanty carpet and oak-panelled walls, on which hung two or three modern sketches and one ancient portrait in oils. One window gave a view over the valley ; the other, in a strange situation, just beside the fireplace, reaching to the ground, without sill or sash, apparently a mere hole in the wall, looked out upon a network of broken walls, mouldering and moss-covered, in which it was possible to trace the ruins of a larger house than the cottage which had inherited from it the name of Neville Grange.

My toilet made, I left my room, without bestowing much attention on the details of its appearance. I was joined by Charles ; and when we reached the drawing-room he introduced me to his mother, a lady still beautiful and elegant, in middle age and widow's weeds, and to her elder daughters, girls

between sixteen and twenty. Annie, the younger, resembled her mother. Her beauty was of the best Saxon type ; that which, in spite of fair hair, blue eyes, and clear, soft complexion, is redeemed by something of refined elegance about the features, and of intellectual expression in eye and brow, from the painfully close resemblance to a wax doll, which is so often characteristic of Teutonic loveliness. Flora was thoroughly Norman — such as might have been the heiress of Warwick ere her marriage with the last hereditary chief of the house of Neville—with slender form, a hand which every sculptor must have admired in perfect despair of imitation ; a head small, gracefully set on, and of exquisite shape, with ringlets of raven blackness and—the only instance I ever saw of true black hair that was not coarse—as soft and fine as her sister's. Her eyes were dark ; of their exact colour I never could satisfy myself, but of their brilliancy there could be no doubt or forgetfulness, nor yet of that exquisite softness which belongs only to dark eyes when earnest emotion finds unconscious expression in their upturned gaze. Why I did not fall in love with Flora is not now to the purpose. But so penetrated was I with interest in her and admiration for her beauty, that during the evening I could not help observing her with a close attention which made me aware—certain beyond the possibility of doubt—that some painful anxiety was preying

upon her mind. A jest from her brother, a sudden appeal to her notice from the children, would bring colour to her cheek in warm, fast-fading flushes; when unnoticed she seemed absorbed, not so much in reverie as in anxiety. I am not a close observer of countenances, but most of us perceive the difference between the face of a dreamer and a thinker—can even discriminate between meditative thought and that kind of consideration which is preparing for the future, planning the achievement of a plot or the avoidance of a misfortune. The closer my observation, the clearer became my comprehension of the nature of the thoughts which disturbed that transparent countenance. Always, as she seemed to despair for a moment, and intermit her calculation, a shadow that spoke of fear, and of something that seemed like shame, passed over her face. If it had been possible to associate with that face and form, so evidently belonging to the highest "aristocracy of nature," so lofty and so pure, any thought of dishonour or untruth, or if Flora had been young enough for the innocent scrapes of childhood, I should have said that she anticipated some fatal discovery—was scheming to avoid being "*found out*." Most men, perhaps most women, are subject to such alarms from time to time; but men do not like to believe that there can be any cause for them in the mind of a young and beautiful girl.

We talked pleasantly and frankly, all of us. Flora spoke unfrequently; but when she did speak, the clear tones of a voice that "like a silver clarion rang," though only like the clarion's notes subdued by distance, and something noble as well as novel in what she said, gave our conversation its chief zest and charm. I had fallen into the bachelor habit of smoking a cigar immediately after the evening meal, and that digestive had become to me as necessary as the meal itself; and Charlie was fully of my mind. But after tea that evening—for the Nevilles dined early, and Charles was too true a gentleman not to know that nothing so annoys a guest as household changes made for him—I was pleased that there was no excuse for the accustomed departure of the ladies, and deaf to his hints, that pointed towards sunset clouds and meant tobacco-smoke. And when bedtime came—their hours were early—my regrets were more sincere than Annie believed them.

"You will get your cigar with Charlie, and 'thank us much for going.' I know he has been watching for ten o'clock a full hour and a half."

"I plead guilty to the cigar, Miss Neville; but I, who have that every night of my life, and enjoy ladies' society only by such rare chances as this, would readily go to bed cigarless if you would postpone your retirement but half an hour."

"Take care lest they take you at your word,"

said Charlie, in horror; and his sister, smiling, followed Mrs Neville and Flora from the room. Charlie and I turned out. The wind blew hard; it generally blows in Westmoreland throughout the autumn, and to smoke, save under shelter, had been impossible. We wrapped railway rugs round us, and sought shelter in an angle of the ruins. A broken wall, some eight feet high, joined that of the cottage just beneath the second window in my room. Cæsar's kennel, where he lay unchained, stood at a little distance by what had once been the opposite wall of a small room or closet, apparently enclosed in the centre of the old house. Here it was possible to light a match; here we found seats upon the fallen fragments of the wall, and smoked in peace.

"This place," said Charlie, "or rather some ten feet above our heads, was the scene of the family tragedy from which our house dates its decay, and the doom—if your modern principles will let me call it so—that hangs over us."

"And what is that doom?" I inquired, in perhaps a sceptical tone.

"Do you not know," my friend asked, "that in no generation does more than one male of the house live to reach the full maturity of manhood, and that he never dies in his bed? Ah, you may smile. But so truly have we believed in the doom, that every chief of my line has married before he

reached my age, lest his race should end with him; and yet never since Sir Guy's time have two brothers of our blood been men together. And never has any head of the family died save by a violent or a sudden death. My great-grandfather fell at Yorktown; his father had been drowned while bathing in Grasmere; my grandfather was killed at Badajos——"

I knew why he paused. I remembered the riot unquelled; the blame of civilian imbecility laid on the soldier; the forbearance slandered as cowardice, the sentence of the court-martial avoided by suicide, four months before Charlie's youngest sister was born. I remembered for what cause his mother wore the widow's weeds she had never abandoned. The superstition of my friend began to touch me. I could not turn to indifferent matters, as I might have done had any other man spoken to me of his family misfortunes; for Charlie was my intimate friend. So I asked him—

"And what is the story of the crime by which this doom has been entailed on all Sir Guy's posterity?"

What, have you never heard the legend of our house? Well, that is not surprising, for it is not one of which we care to talk to strangers; and even to you, I should hardly have cared to speak of it anywhere but here. Elsewhere you might have doubted it or smiled at it; here, where it

occurred, though you have no better reason to believe it, you are more likely to do so."

I felt that there was some truth in this. My companion proceeded—

"Sir Guy's picture hangs over your fireplace. It is worth a careful scrutiny, for much of his strange and wayward character is to be traced in those lineaments. He quitted his house at an early age for the Court of King Charles I., leaving behind him his aged father and a brother, a mere child, to whom he was tenderly attached. This boy had been Sir Guy's constant companion in boyish pranks, while yet so little that his brother would carry him on his shoulder; he rode out for miles perched before Guy on the saddle, went with him up the hills or on the lake, followed him like a dog, and was cherished by him as if he had been not a brother but an only son. Before the heir went from home, the old man called him to his chamber and earnestly commended the child to his brotherly affection. 'You love him now, Guy; but you are wayward of mood, ambitious of heart, unforgiving of temper. Many things may change you; many clouds may come between you and your youth before you return home. You will not see him again for many years, and time changes affection and wears out memory. Swear to me that you will never wrong him or neglect him; that he shall never have reason bitterly to feel the difference

between a father's and a brother's love.' 'May God forget me; may good fortune desert me and my house,' answered Guy, 'if by fault or default of mine my brother come to harm.' And with these words Sir Guy left his father and went forth into the world.

"News came of him now and anon. At first he was in favour with the King, and rose to rank and influence in the royal service. His father died, believing that all was well, and more hopeful for his son than he had ever been. Then he was expected at home. But he wrote, arranging for his brother's education under the care of the venerable clergyman of the parish, and came not. He had ties at Court; the wife of a great nobleman, one of the loveliest in Henrietta's train, had fixed his fancy, and, as he thought, had smiled upon him. He was a man of ungoverned passions and fearless temper; he pursued the lady with a fierce fervour which terrified herself, and with a reckless vehemence which endangered both. Whether she yielded or not was never known; enough occurred to excite suspicion, and her husband, a man of calm and generous disposition, but of unflinching determination, resolved to save his wife, if there were yet time. He obtained from the King a foreign appointment for young Neville. It was peremptorily and not very respectfully refused. Lord —— then withdrew his wife from the Court, and sent

her to his country seat. Sir Guy suspected his motive, and was infuriated. In those days it was easy to fix a quarrel, even on so eminent a man. Guy Neville was held to have devised and forced on, of set purpose, the duel in which Lord —— was mortally wounded. Ere his enemy had quitted the ground, Lord ——'s mother, who had suspected the nature of his engagement, came to the spot in time to see her son expire. Beside his bleeding corpse she cursed his assassin, and prayed that, as he had brought desolation on a happy home, so his own might be desolate; that as he had cut short an honourable and useful life, so might his own life, and the lives of his descendants, be cut short in their prime. Sir Guy cowered beneath her curse, and it was with difficulty that his second hurried him from the field. He had to hide himself for the time, of course. Presently he learned that there was no such chance of pardon for his crime as he had hoped. The childless dowager had thrown herself at the King's feet, and Charles, greatly moved, had promised her justice in the emphatic words of David, 'As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die.' Sir Guy fled his country and took refuge in Holland, tormented alike by the bitterness of remorse and the fury of vindictive hatred towards the sovereign who had refused to treat his quarrel as a fair use of the chivalric

practice of private combat, and dealt with him not as a duellist but as a murderer. In Holland he fell in with Puritan exiles, who, if they did not pretend to palliate his crime, encouraged and fostered his lust for vengeance against the King who had sought to punish it. Sir Guy became the associate of Puritans; married a daughter of one of their chiefs; and, while refusing to lead the life of an ascetic, joined heart and soul in the wildest and most wicked of their conspiracies.

“The rebellion broke out, and Sir Guy Neville returned to England, and joined the armies of the Parliament. He held a command in a force which was operating in the north of Lancashire. One day information was received through a spy that a messenger had been sent, with a mounted escort, to convey despatches from the royal partisans in the same quarter to the Marquess of Montrose, and Sir Guy, with his troop, was detached to intercept him.

“They came up in sight of the escort a few miles from hence, and gave chase. Seeing themselves completely outnumbered, the Cavaliers set spurs to their horses, and, being admirably mounted, contrived to distance the majority of their pursuers. Neville, with a few of his troopers, outstripped the rest, and pressed the fugitives hard. Suddenly the latter drew bridle, turned round, and rode full upon this vanguard, evidently intending to overpower it

before the remainder of the troop could come up. The leader of the Royalists was a very young man, without a beard, and with a mustache almost silken in softness, with slender form and very youthful air and figure, but with the same stern expression, the same dark deep-set eyes and black eyebrows that you will recognise in the portrait of Sir Guy. His long love-locks, which escaped from his steel cap and fell over his shoulders, were of raven black. In a word, we have his portrait; to-morrow you shall see it. Flora resembles it as much as a girl may resemble a man. The Cavalier rode straight at Neville, who was a few yards in advance of his foremost troopers, and swords were crossed. Sir Guy was a first-rate swordsman, but in the young Royalist he had met his match in skill and courage. It was to sheer strength that the Roundhead owed the advantage which enabled him twice to overpower his opponent's guard, and inflict two fearful wounds, one on the head, and one on the left shoulder. The Cavaliers, meanwhile, had beaten back the rebels; two of them rode to the rescue of their young chief, and it was only by a desperate exertion of his own swordsmanship and his horse's power that Sir Guy evaded their weapons, and made good his retreat. The remainder of his troopers were now fast approaching, and the Cavaliers resumed their flight, carrying off with them the victim of the Puritan's sword.

“The rebels continued the chase; and though they were distanced, and the turns and windings of the mountain-road concealed their enemy, Neville was confident of success. He knew the road—he knew that it led directly to his ancestral home, and that the fugitives could not go much farther without halting, especially as they had to carry with them a man in all likelihood mortally wounded. There, or at the neighbouring residence of the clergyman, they would probably leave him. The troopers rode on rapidly. They reached the rectory; it was deserted, and they searched it in vain. With difficulty their captain restrained their savage wish to fire the home of the man who had been the friend and teacher of his youth, the guardian of his brother—now, as Guy had learned from rumour, serving with the King in the south. It was that rumour which had determined Guy to seek service in Lancashire. The band rode up to Neville Grange. The Cavaliers were not there: they had passed by, said the one domestic who was visible, at full gallop, and without drawing bridle. Guy looked at the man hard and sternly, and he trembled and turned pale beneath that gaze.

“‘Ride on in pursuit,’ said the captain to his lieutenant; ‘I, with four men, stay here to search the house.’ And he dismounted and entered the house. The servant followed him, with voluble protests that no one had crossed the threshold

except the aged clergyman, who had consented to take charge of it, since Master Philip had quitted it to join the King. Guy cast a hasty glance over the lower rooms and then passed on up-stairs. The servant accompanied him in ever-increasing terror, which might, however, be attributed to the fact that two troopers followed him with loaded carbines, and two others held theirs at full cock pointed at either side of his shaking head. Passing through room after room, Neville paused at the door of that you are to sleep in to-night. It looked then much as it looks now, save that where this window is was then a panel of the oak which lines the rest of the wall. The door was half-open, and Guy entered. A stain on the bare floor caught his eye. He stooped and touched it with his hand.

"'Blood !' he said, sharply ; but he said no more. He asked no question. He strode straight to the fireplace ; and, putting forth his right hand, touched a part of the panel where that window is now placed. The troopers stared. He pressed it hard ; still harder did they stare, while the servant stood with his eyes almost starting from his head, gazing in mute and motionless terror on the proceedings of the unknown intruder.

"'Bring your carbines here, three of you !' said Sir Guy, in a low tone. 'One of you keep his at that rascal's ear, and blow out his brains if he speaks. Now, bring the butts to bear one above

the other in a line with my hand ; knock me this panel in.' The soldiers were surprised, for there was no sign of an opening. Nevertheless they obeyed. The carbine-butts went with full force against the oak panelling ; a hollow sound was returned. They struck again with all the strength they could muster. A sound of crashing wood followed ; the panel was broken. Still it held its place, until Sir Guy thrust his arm through a hole made by the blows, and drew a bolt. A shot was fired from the other side ; and, as he drew back his broken wrist, the panel gave way and fell before the renewed blows of the troopers.

"A secret room, or rather closet, stood open, just above our heads. Opposite the door was a pallet, by the side of which a light was burning. Beside this pallet knelt an aged man in the robes of a priest, his back to the intruders ; upon it lay a youth, his head bandaged, his shirt blood-stained, his face livid with the hue of approaching death, and yet grasping a smoking pistol in his right hand. Guy Neville recognised the adversary with whom he had crossed swords an hour before. He recognised more. He grew suddenly pale, and staggered back : he strove an instant for utterance. A look of surprise, anguish, and horror, but also of recognition, crossed the face of the dying man. An exclamation rose to his parted lips ; but ere it was uttered, ere Guy could recover breath, a ball from

one of the carbines crashed through the bandaged head, and the Cavalier, without a word or a groan, fell back—dead.

"Paralysed with horror, the fratricide stood on the threshold of the death-chamber. His staring eyes were fixed upon the corpse, his hand had fallen by his side, the pain of his wound unfelt, his very senses frozen with the terror that had stricken him to the soul. He was wakened to consciousness by a voice that he knew well, speaking in tones of prophetic denunciation that pierced the conscience of the assassin. The aged priest—his tutor—had risen, and confronted the startled troopers and their cowering chief.

"'So, Guy Neville, rebel to thy King, recreant to thy God, murderer of thy brother! is it thus we meet for the last time? Go hence: the curse of Cain is upon thee, and the measure of thy crimes is not yet full.'

"He passed out, untouched by the troopers, holding his robes together lest the murderer's touch should pollute them. Guy Neville stood rooted to the spot till the old man was gone. Then he turned—fled from the chamber and from the house, mounted his horse, and rode none knew whither.

"Fifteen years later, an old and worn man, a young woman, and an infant, arrived late one night, and took possession of the Grange. They were all dressed in deep mourning; the father,

wife, and child of a second Philip Neville, the heir of the race, who had just perished in a drunken brawl. The widow and orphan were lodged in the most distant quarter of the house; the old man, aged in middle life, occupied the chamber that opened into the secret room. They sought him the next day; his chamber was vacant. One old servant of the house, who alone knew the secret of the panel, entered the hiding-place whither a brother had led his brother's murderers. There lay Sir Guy, on the bed on which that corpse had lain, still spotted with blood. There was no sign of violence on his person, but he was dead. Nothing to account for his death, but the expression of mortal terror on a countenance that had never blanched in the face of battle; the features convulsed with such an agony of fear as might well suffice to kill. The dead body lay in state, and the trembling peasantry and the horror-struck yeomen, who looked upon it, whispered one another that only some fearful visitant from another world could have wrought on those iron nerves the terror which had driven the blood-stained soul from a frame still erect and vigorous. And it is an accepted creed among their descendants to this day, that either his brother's spirit, or some yet more terrible apparition, had come to summon the fratricide to his last account."

I listened in silence. Charles told the story

with a faith that imposed upon and awed me, and I have since satisfied myself that it is as true as documentary history can make it; that Sir Guy really caused his brother's death, and really died in that chamber of terror—the terror of a guilty conscience or a ghostly vision.

A young soldier fresh from the Crimea, speaking lightly of musketry and of round shot, once confessed his horror of shells in the naive expression: "I never became so used to them but that I let my cigar out when they passed over my head." So did my extinct Cabana bear witness to the effect of the Neville legend. It was a minute or two before I could shake off the spell sufficiently to light a second.

"Some unbeliever in ghosts remarks," I observed, "that whenever a man really believes that he sees a visitor from another world, either his life or his reason gives way. If this be so, it is no wise wonderful that the vision of his brother's ghost should frighten to death your amiable ancestor."

"Don't jest with my tale," said Charlie, somewhat displeased. "If you don't believe it, I do; and on ample evidence."

"One sometimes jests with things that are too terrible to be seriously contemplated, just by force of reaction," I replied. "Hence it is that the two most awful ideas known to man—Death and Satan

—are most frequently the themes of jest, even to those who believe in the one as heartily as when they realise it they dread the other.”

After a pause Charles said—

“I have never thought that the sight of a ghost, apart from the horror which may environ an evil spirit or a bad conscience, would be terrible. On the contrary, I have often longed to see one—one that I knew—as a proof that would set at rest for ever all doubts concerning the future. I have great sympathy with those bargains between friends of which we hear in legend, that the soul of the one first deceased should return to warn the survivor.”

“I doubt,” I answered, “whether a ghost would serve your purpose. From the days of Homer down to these, men have seen ghosts from time to time. But they have all been alike. What are Homer’s inhabitants of Hades but ghosts, as they are seen of ghost-seers—empty phantoms without sense or speech, rather the shadows than the spirits of the departed, whose form they assume? And who that should collect his idea of a future existence from the ghosts that have been seen of men—wandering about churchyards, gibbering over buried treasures, haunting the scenes of crimes done or suffered—to say nothing of those which rap out bad verses and bad grammar by the aid of ill-educated tables—but would echo with sad foreboding the wish of the dead Achilles :—

'Make not light of death, I beseech thee, gallant Odysseus.
Fain would I, still living on earth, be serf to another,
Serf to a landless master with scanty store of subsistence,
Rather than reign o'er the dead, sole king in the realm of the
Shadows.'

"You ought not to confound the seen ghosts with the table-rapping phenomena. Whether human or not, the agency of the latter is certainly not *superhuman*. Now, the ghosts that are seen may be all that we could wish to be as spirits, wanting nothing but the power of communicating with us, and that through our deficiency, not through theirs. As to their occupations, do they not agree exactly with what philosophy would suggest as the future fate of those who, while on earth, had no ideas above or beyond the best of earth's pursuits?"

"Well," said I, "I won't debate the philosophy of Mr Owen, or the evidences of Mrs Crowe, after sunset. If you would like to see a ghost, I would not: and he who falls asleep talking of them may well meet one in his dreams. We will talk politics till our cigars go out, and then I shall go to bed."

But I did not. My nerves were too much excited for sleep. I had not spent an evening of pleasant talk for a long time, nor heard a family legend before, as told by a firm believer in its horrors, and the effect of the double stimulus was to render me thoroughly wakeful. As I took off my coat, and looked for a peg to hang or a chair

to lay it on, my eye was caught by a garment hung in one corner—it was a lady's shawl. Then one of the drawers which I opened, in order to deposit the contents of my valise, was full of those pretty feminine trifles which seem to a bachelor so mysterious and so charming—sleeves and collars, and needlework that did not seem intended for either. It shows strongly the innate grace of woman that she should spend so much art and labour in rendering ornamental what is never to be seen; and this trait alone should dispose of the slander that women dress only to fascinate men. A pincushion here, an unfinished fragment of work there, a general prettiness and tasteful arrangement of the whole, proved to me that I occupied a lady's room. “Whose? If any of the family have sole possession of this room, it must be the eldest daughter. I have, therefore, ousted Flora from her apartment. I hope she does not dislike a change as much as I do. I think I should be glad, however, to escape the gloom of these panelled walls and oaken ceiling, and the eyes of that portrait, which follow one everywhere.” And here my observations brought me face to face with the picture of Sir Guy Neville. Painted in his youth, it nevertheless betrayed, or I fancied in its expression, the passions which blasted his life. The dark, deep-set eyes spoke at once of fiery spirit and of iron will; the mouth, despite the mustache which half-

hid it, betrayed in the fulness of the under lip the vehemence of passion, and in the curved upper lip the scornful impatience of control which made that passion his master. In a word, the face was one in which a glance could detect a nature which would hardly be held within the bounds of law, either by conscience or by fear; which would never know how to forego a purpose or forgive an injury. I gazed long upon the portrait, and then turned away. I have said that it hung over the fireplace, and therefore beside the strange window that had once been the secret door. I took up a book, wrapped a dressing-gown about me, and sat down in a rocking-chair by the grate, to read. I sat on one side, so as to have the window on my right hand, and my eyes directed away from it. I read for some few minutes before I began to feel uncomfortable. An impression that I was not alone—a nervous horror, as of some unseen Presence—gained so powerful a hold of my spirit, that for some time I could not resolve to move or look around. Some at least of my readers will recognise the sensation. When I did move by a strong effort, I turned my eyes full upon the window, smiling at my own folly, while I avoided the fixed look with which the portrait seemed to haunt me. My reason contemptuously assured my shrinking nerves that there was nothing there,—that I should turn only to look upon vacant darkness.

Wrong! what are these eyes fixed on mine with no painted stare? what is this face, on a level with my own, and almost within reach of my hand, between which and me is nothing but a thin sheet of glass? There, at the window, rose the head and bust of Sir Guy Neville, each feature the exact semblance of the portrait, with pale, terror-stricken countenance, and dark piercing eyes gazing in horror upon me, as they had gazed on that vision which scared his soul from her habitation! For a time, which could not be counted by moments, I sat fascinated, paralysed, my sight fixed upon those spectral eyes that glared into mine. For an instant I regained will enough to hide my face with my hand. When I looked again the spectre had vanished. At that moment a sound which broke the dead silence of night startled me, and made me spring to my feet trembling in every limb. It was the stroke of the clock, which, from the neighbouring church, rang out the signal of midnight. I heard that, and for a long time I saw and heard no more.

When I woke from that trance, or swoon—for I have no idea of the nature of the insensibility that had fallen upon me—my candle was flickering in the socket, and my teeth chattered, and my limbs shook with cold. Happily for me there was a nightlight in the room; I lighted that, mechanically undressed, and crept beneath the blankets. I

looked at my watch as I took it off: it was two in the morning. Strange as it may seem, I was scarcely in bed before I fell asleep.

I was wakened from a dreamless rest by Charlie's emphatic summons, and had to dress myself with a haste which left no time for reflection over the horror of the night. I was startled, however, when I looked in the glass, by the ghastly pallor of my face, and was conscious of sensations of mental exhaustion and bodily pain such as often follow a day of severe toil and exposure, but rarely trouble us when we wake from a rest however short. When I joined the family at breakfast, Mrs Neville almost started as she greeted me, and Charlie exclaimed, "Why, old fellow, you look like a ghost!"

I could not repress a shudder at the word, and Annie asked, laughingly, "Did you meet one in the ruins last night?" "Not in the ruins," I answered, half unconsciously. By this time the attention of the whole party was fixed upon me, and I made a desperate effort to rouse myself, and shake off my absence of mind and the sense of gloom and terror that hung over me. Annie had ventured another question, but was silenced by her mother, and Charles, to relieve himself from the general feeling of curiosity and embarrassment, took up the newspaper of the previous day, which the post had brought in time for their breakfast. I forced

myself to look up, and attend to what was going on. Flora was tea-maker, and I held out my hand to take a cup from hers. In doing so I felt that her wrist trembled so that she could hardly hold it; and, looking in her face, I saw an expression of alarm and dismay, where yesterday there had been only uneasiness and perplexity. Certainly she feared something, and the danger had come nearer. The ghost could have nothing to do with it. It was a very earthly fear that troubled that sweet face. Suddenly Charlie uttered an exclamation, and read the following paragraph from the newspaper:—

“Captain Monthermer, —th Hussars, was tried on the 10th July by court-martial, for disobedience to orders and insulting his superior officer on parade. The court assembled at Meerut, under the presidency of Colonel——. Captain Monthermer was found guilty, and sentenced to be dismissed her Majesty’s service. The sentence has been confirmed by the Commander-in-Chief.”

I noticed the deep colour that came over Flora’s face as this was read, and comments were made upon it by Annie, Mrs Neville, and Charles. Certainly, I thought, this is no news to Flora, and it has some painful interest for her. Does she know this scapegrace? Surely not; she was a mere infant when he quarrelled with her father.

After breakfast, Charlie summoned me to join

him in a cigar. I could not repress a shudder as we came to the very spot where we had sat the night before, just under the haunted window.

"What's the matter?" said he, in surprise. "It is not cold. And you look as pale as a ghost, or as if you had seen one. Did my story spoil your night's rest?"

"Its hero did," said I, trying to smile. "Don't laugh at me, Charlie, and don't be in a hurry to attribute what I tell you to my own fancy. Hundreds of times have I sat at night recalling much more horrible stories, and expecting when I looked up to see some frightful spectre with its eyes glaring into mine: and yet never has my imagination painted a visible form upon the darkness. But last night I saw at that window the ghost of Sir Guy, the exact semblance of the picture over the mantel-piece; ay, saw it as distinctly as I see you now; and that with a light burning by my side, bright enough to read a penny newspaper by."

"The deuce you did! Are you sure you were not dreaming?"

"I had a book in my hand, and had just looked up from it. I was as wide awake as you were when you told me the story."

"Sir Guy's ghost was never seen by a stranger before, and but once or twice by the men of our own family. Are you certain it was that face, and that your imagination did not lead you to attribute

to some intending robber the features of Sir Guy, whose image just then filled your mind?"

"I am as certain of the face as that I saw the—thing at all. Feature for feature, it was the face of the portrait, save that it lacked the long flowing hair, and seemed somewhat older. I cannot say that I observed it attentively, but it burnt itself into my memory in that moment; and if I were a painter I could draw it line for line, with the very expression of horror, or of consternation, that it wore. I may, though I feel assured that I was not, have been deceived altogether. It may have been a spectral illusion, the vision of a diseased brain. But if I saw anything I saw what I have described. Besides, who could have climbed to that window and not have been torn down by your dog? *Cæsar* was loose."

"Strange—very strange," observed Charles, musingly. "How was he dressed?"

"In black; at least perfect blackness surrounded the face. That was all I observed. It is folly to talk of the dress of a ghost." I said this a little angrily. I was quite certain that I had seen, and not fancied, the apparition—that it had really been there, and that it was no ordinary denizen of this world.

Charlie did not answer, and we smoked on in silence. After some ten minutes he threw away his cigar and rose.

"I am going over to Crosthwaite's. I should like to know who was the guest we saw yesterday. . . . And so—Monthermer might have left. . . . But will you come with me?"

"Gladly," I answered, as we went off together. "But you don't fancy Monthermer could be here?"

"I don't know . . . in truth, I am a little uneasy. Guy has inherited, apparently, the romantic temper and ungovernable passions of our ancestor—whom, by the way, he resembles exceedingly in personal appearance. His mother and great-grandmother were both Nevilles, descendants of Sir Guy, and members of our own house. Early left an orphan, my father brought him up till he was about eighteen. Flora, then a little girl in short frocks, was his especial favourite, and was warmly attached to him; and the quarrel which separated him from our family affected her so much, child as she was, that she became seriously ill. About two years ago she was staying with a relative in Liverpool, and Monthermer's regiment was quartered there. He, being unknown except by name to my aunt, met Flora more than once at the houses of friends, and I fear in her walks; and both of them persuaded themselves that the love they had felt for each other in their childhood had ripened into passionate attachment. Before they were separated, some rash pledge had passed between them. Flora was brought home, and gradu-

ally seemed to forget this bit of romance, as we forbore to allude to it, and took it for granted that nothing of a serious kind had occurred. But she has seen no one comparable to Guy in personal beauty, intellectual brilliancy, or romantic humour, since her return home : her quiet life in this secluded place has been but too likely to leave her time to dwell on the one interesting episode in her life. If she and Monthermer were to meet again, one interview would fix his hold on her imagination as strongly as ever. But he may well have forgotten her, and I hope that a misgiving which has come over me is as unfounded as it seems improbable."

We reached the farm, and questioned the stout old yeoman. He was very uncommunicative, and evidently suspected that our questions had some unfriendly purpose. Thus put on his guard, the spirit of hospitality made him vigilant in his guest's behalf; and we could only gather that a young gentleman had been there some days, and had left very early this morning—whether suddenly or not, we could not ascertain. Whatever alarms or suspicions Charlie might have felt seemed to be dissipated by the speedy disappearance of the unknown stranger.

My visit was a pleasant one. Flora grew cheerful and at ease; she and her sister were charming, frank, amusing companions, as free from affected

shyness as from that fast and forward manner which is the more popular and fashionable affectation of to-day. The children were pleasant and well-behaved; their mother kind and hospitable; Charles as agreeable a companion as ever. Many were our pleasant excursions; incessant our conversation on all subjects, grave and gay, that did not partake of a political flavour; and I never left a friend's house more reluctantly than when an editorial summons warned me that I had overstayed my leave at Neville Grange. I certainly slept more soundly at home; but though expected with fear and trembling, the ghost never again appeared at the window, never entered the haunted chamber.

Next May I ran up to London, to visit theatres and exhibitions, and enjoy three days of dissipation. On the morning before my return, I entered the rooms of the Royal Academy. I had looked at a dozen of the most bepraised and best-abused pictures, when, hanging just above the line, a striking portrait caught my eye. I staggered against an elderly gentleman, whose gouty foot was unhappily next to me; his lusty curses restored me to myself, and I gazed again at the picture with more self-possession. Above the collar of a cavalry uniform—one arm resting on the saddle of a fine bay charger—looked out right into my eyes the face I had seen at the window of Neville Grange. But

not as I should have painted it. The features were the same ; but they were calm and stern, save that the upper lip seemed to curl slightly, as with the expression of habitual pride. The same eyes gazed into mine ; but the expression was no longer that which they had borne on that terrible night. Then, they were full of a horror which overspread the whole countenance ; now, they looked forth with a glance of scornful fire. The picture was that of a soldier on the instant before battle ; it bore no other title than "An Officer," and the catalogue gave the name of an artist just deceased. I had no clue to the individuality of the figure ; was it perchance a fancy sketch by one who had seen the portrait of Sir Guy Neville ? I could not tell.

I visited Chester on my way back, having business with the editor of a county paper. On returning to the station I had some half an hour to wait, and I strolled up and down the platform. A train came up from Liverpool, and out of it flowed a stream of passengers. A young lady was left standing by the carriage, whence her companion had gone in quest of their luggage. As she turned her face towards me I recognised Flora Neville.

She saw me, and coloured and trembled violently. I was greatly surprised, but advanced to speak to her. She gave me her hand mechanically, and strove to answer my greeting, but in vain.

"How comes it that I meet you here, Miss Neville?" I asked. "I understood from Charlie that you had been in Liverpool, but were to return to the north to-day. Are you paying a visit to Chester, or going on elsewhere?"

My questions seemed to trouble Flora extremely. But I had not time for surprise or conjecture. A figure was coming towards us, with a large port-manteau in one hand and a carpet-bag in the other. It was my turn to tremble, and, if not to colour, to turn a little faint and probably pale. Unspiritual as his present occupation was, I saw there not only the original of the Academic portrait, but the very face that had gazed in upon me through the window of Neville Grange. Again an expression of dismay, though far less intense than then, overspread that face as its owner recognised me. But his approach restored to Flora the self-possession which had deserted both of us. Turning round, and fairly looking me in the face, with a blush and a smile, she said—

"Allow me to introduce my husband, Guy Monthermer!"

It flashed across me at once. I had heard from Charles three days before, and not a word of this marriage; nay, words which distinctly implied that Flora was returning home.* Instead of doing so, she had turned off, by appointment, at some point on her route; met Monthermer, and married him,

having gained in this manner a full day's start of all pursuit. I looked gravely at Monthermer.

"Come, sir," he said, in answer to my look, "be just to us both. I was a hot-headed youngster when I quarrelled with her father; on that account I knew it was hopeless to ask the consent of her family: on that and others, if you will. I have done many foolish things, but never anything that should make a gentleman blush for himself, or a woman weep for him. I have loved her since she was a child; she has loved me for nearly three years." Flora pressed his arm. Her face was turned from me, and her eyes were looking up into his. He went on—

"I met her again last autumn, at great risk, in her own home. We should then have concerted our marriage but for you. I had only ventured to see her at night, for there were too many about who knew my person, and would have recognised me instantly had they seen me by day. Several nights in succession had I climbed the wall, and spoken with Flora through the single pane of that window which opens with a rustic latch. One day, when I had ventured down into the valley, I saw at a distance young Neville returning from a drive; I hastened home, but was still in sight as he drove by. That night I postponed my visit to Flora's window later than usual: it was midnight when I climbed to my accustomed place—the dog, who

had been civil to me from the first, evidently understanding that I did not belong to the usual order of trespassers, remaining silent—and was about to tap at the window, when I recognised a stranger—a man—in Flora's usual seat. The blood rushed back to my heart, and I nearly fell; he shrank as if he had seen a spectre, and covered his eyes with his hand. I recovered my presence of mind, dropped instantly to the ground, ran home, and left at daylight. Some days afterwards I received a letter from Flora, in which she gave me a graphic account—derived from her brother—of your ghostly vision. Heartily I laughed over our mutual terror,—mine of a spy, and yours of a spectre."

"Then it was no visitant from another world I saw that night? it was—you were——"

"I was Guy Neville's Ghost."

THE GREAT UNKNOWN.

A JEST FROM THE GERMAN.

BY THE LATE FREDERICK HARDMANN.

[*MAGA.* DECEMBER 1850.]

IT was a bright afternoon in the beginning of October, and the little town of Miffelstein lay basking in the genial sunbeams. But its streets, generally so cheerful, were upon that day solitary. The town seemed deserted, and its unusual aspect evidently surprised a pedestrian, who ascended the steep slope of the main street, and gazed curiously about him, without perceiving a single face at the windows. Everything was shut up. No children played on the thresholds; no inquisitive serving wench peeped from door or garret: some fowls were picking up provender in the road, and a superannuated dog blinked and slumbered in the sun; but of human beings none were to be seen. In seeming perplexity the traveller shook his head. Then—not with the hesitating step of a stranger in the land, but with firm and confident strides—he

walked straight to the principal inn, whose doors stood invitingly open upon the market-place. Like one familiar with the locality, he turned to his left beneath the entrance archway, and ascended the stairs leading directly to the coffee-room. The coffee-room was empty. A waiter, who sat reading in the bar, welcomed the new-comer with a slight nod, but did not otherwise disturb his studies.

"God bless you, old boy!" cheerfully exclaimed the traveller, casting from his shoulders a handsome knapsack; "just see if you can manage to leave your chair. I am no travelling tailor or tinker, but the long-lost Alexis, returned from his wanderings, and well disposed to make himself comfortable in his uncle's house."

With an exclamation of joyful surprise, the old servant sprang from his seat, and grasped the hand of the unexpected guest.

"Thanks, my honest old friend," replied the young man to his affectionate greeting, "and now tell me at once what the deuce has come over Miffelstein? Has the plague been here, or the Turks? Are the worthy Miffelsteiners all gathered to their fathers, or are they imitating the southerners, and snoring the siesta?"

The waiter hastened to explain that the great harvest-feast was being celebrated at a short distance from the town, and that the entire population of Miffelstein had flocked thither, with the excep-

tion of the bedridden and the street-keepers ; and of his master, and the young mistress, he added, the former of whom was detained by business, and the latter was dressing herself, but who both would follow the stream before half an hour was over.

“ True ! ” cried Alexis, striking his forehead with his finger : “ I have almost forgotten my native village, with its vintage and harvest joys ; and I much fear it returns the ill compliment in kind. I can pass my time, however, till my worthy uncle and fair cousin are visible. Bring me something to eat : I am both hungry and thirsty.”

“ What cellar and kitchen contain is at your honour’s service,” replied the waiter. “ We had no strangers at table to-day, but cold meat is there ; and, if it so please you, some kail-soup shall be instantly warmed.”

“ Kail-soup,” said Alexis with a smile ; “ none of that, thank you. Cold meat — *bene*. But don’t forget the cellar.”

“ Assuredly not. Whatever your honour pleases. A flask of sack, or a jug of ale ? ”

“ Sack ! sack ! — Miffelstein sack ! ” cried Alexis, laughing heartily. “ Anything you like. Only be quick about it.”

Whilst the waiter hurried to the larder, Alexis examined the apartment, which struck him as strangely altered since his boyish days. The old familiar furniture had disappeared, and was re-

placed by oaken tables, stools, and settees of rude and outlandish construction. The shining sideboard had made way for an antiquated worm-eaten piece of furniture with Gothic carvings. Altogether the cheerful dining-room had undergone an odd change. The walls were papered with views of bleak mountain scenery, dismal lakes and turreted castles, enlivened here and there with groups of Scottish peasantry. The curtains, of many-coloured plaid, were not very elegant, and contrasted strangely with the long narrow French windows. "What on earth does it all mean?" exclaimed the puzzled Alexis. Just as he asked himself the question, the waiter entered the room, with a countenance of extraordinary formality, bearing meat and wine upon a silver salver. This he placed before him with an infinity of ceremonious gestures and grimaces.

"Your lordship will graciously put up with this poor refreshment," he said. "The beef is as tender as if it came from the king's table (God bless him!); the sack, or rather the claret, is of the best vintage. The kail-soup would hardly have been forthcoming; for although the cook is kept at home by a cold, she is reading, and cannot leave her book. And now, if it will pleasure your lordship, I will play you a tune upon the bagpipes."

In mute and open-mouthed astonishment, Alexis stared at the speaker. But the old man's earnest countenance, and a movement he made to fetch the

discordant instrument, restored to him his powers of speech.

“For heaven’s sake!” he cried, “Tobias! stop, come hither, and tell me if you have lost your senses! Lordship! claret! A cook who can’t leave her book! A bagpipe! Tobias! what has come to you?”

“Ah, Mr Alexis!” said the old fellow, suddenly exchanging his quaint and ceremonious bearing for a plaintive simplicity of manner, “to say the truth, I hardly know myself what has come to me. But pray don’t call me Tobias before the master. Caleb has been my name now for a matter of three years. Master and the customers would have it so.”

“Caleb?”

“Yes, my dear Mr Alexis. I and the inn were rebaptised on the same day. I am sorry for both of us, but I am only the servant, and what everybody pleases——”

Alexis pushed open the window and thrust out his head. “True, by all that’s ridiculous!” he exclaimed, turning to the rebaptised waiter; “the old Star hangs there no longer. What is your house called now?”

“The Bear of Bradwardine; and since that has been its name, and everything in it has been so transmogrified, the place is full of strangers, particularly of English, who throng us in the summer.

And there's such laughing and tomfoolery, that at times I'm like to go crazy. They stare at old Caleb as if he himself were the Bear, laugh in his face, and apologise by a handsome tip. That would be all very well, but the neighbours laugh at the master and the inn, and at me and Susan, whose name is now Jenny, and never think of putting hand in pocket to make amends. But what can I do, Mr Alexis? Master is wilful, and I'm sixty. If he discharged me, who would give old Tobias—Caleb, I mean—his daily bread?"

"I would, old fellow," replied Alexis, heartily; "I would, Tobias. You've saved me a thrashing for many a prank, and were always kinder to me than my own uncle, who sometimes forgot that I was his sister's son. If ever you want, and I have a crust, half is yours. But go on, I do not yet understand——"

Tobias cast a timid glance at the door, and then continued, but in a lower tone than before.

"Three years ago," he said, "the mistress died, and soon afterwards things began to go badly. Your uncle neglected the house; and at last, if we had one customer a-day, and three or four on Sundays, we thought ourselves well off. It was all along of books. Every week there came a great parcel from the next town, and master read them through and through, and then the young lady, and then master often again. He neither ate, nor drank,

nor slept: he read. That may have made him learned, but it certainly did not make him rich. One day, when things were at the worst, a stranger came to the inn, and wrote himself down in the book as an Englishman. He it was who turned master's head. The first night they sat up talking till morning; all next day, and the day after that, they were poring over books. Then the folly began; everything must be changed—house and furniture, sign and servants. They say the Englishman gave your uncle money for the first expenses. If everything had gone according to his and master's fancy, you would have found us all in masquerade. The clothes were made for us just like yonder figures on the paper. But we only wore them one day. The blackguards in the street were nigh pulling down the house, and"—here Tobias again lowered his voice—"Justice Stapel sent word to master that he might make as great a fool of himself as he pleased, but that he must keep his servants in decent Christian-like clothing. So we got back to our hose and jackets. The Englishman, when he returned the following spring, and a whole lot of people with him, made a great fuss, and scolded and cursed, and said that we upon the Continent were a set of miserable slaves, and that it was a man's natural right to dress as he liked—or not at all, if it so pleased him. For my part, slave or no slave, I was very glad Justice Stapel had more

power here than the mad Englishman. As it was, I had to learn to play the bagpipes ; and Jenny had to learn to cook as they do in England or Scotland ; and we all had to learn to speak as they speak in master's books, eight pages of which we are obliged to read every day. Jenny likes the books, and says they are better fun than cooking : for my part, I can make nothing of them, and always forget one day what I learned the——"

The old man paused in great trepidation, for just then the door opened, and a beautiful girl, attired in gorgeous Scottish tartans, entered the room.

"Emily ! dear cousin !" cried Alexis, springing to meet the blooming damsel, "though eighteen years instead of nine had elapsed since we parted, I still should have recognised your bright blue eyes." Bright the eyes certainly were, and at that moment they sparkled with surprise and pleasure at the wanderer's return ; but before Alexis had concluded his somewhat boisterous greetings, their brightness was veiled by an expression of melancholy, and the momentary flush upon the maiden's cheek was replaced by a pallid hue, which seemed habitual, but unnatural. The change did not escape the cousin's observant glance, and he pressed her with inquiries as to its cause. At first he obtained no reply but a sigh and a faint smile. His solicitude would not be thus repelled.

"Upon my word, cousin," he said, "I leave you

no peace till you tell what is wrong. I see very well that, during my absence, house and furniture, master and servants, have all been turned upside down. But what can have caused this change in you? Have you too been rebaptised? Has the barbarous Englishman driven you too through the wilderness of his countryman's romances? Have you been compelled, like this poor devil, to swallow 'Redgauntlet' in daily doses, like leaves of senna? Speak out, dear cousin, my old friend and playmate. Assuredly, I little expected to find you still Miss Wirtig. Ere now, I thought some fortunate Jason, daring and deserving, would have borne away the treasure from the Miffelstein Colchis."

Emily cast a side-glance at Tobias, who stood at a short distance, listening to their conversation with an air of respectful sympathy. As if taking a hint, the old man left the apartment. When Emily again turned to her cousin, her eyes glistened with tears.

"Dear Emily," said Alexis, laying aside his headlong bantering tone, and speaking earnestly and affectionately, "place confidence in me, and rely on my zeal to serve you and desire to see you happy. True, I left this house clandestinely, because your father would have made a tradesman of me, when my head was full of Euclid and Vitruvius, and my fingers itched to handle scale and compasses. But it is not the worst sort of deserter

who returns voluntarily to his regiment. Think not ill of me therefore, and confide to me your sorrows. It is nearly three years since William Elben wrote to me that he hoped speedily to take you home as his bride. But now I see that he deceived me."

"William spoke the truth," the maiden hastily replied; "the hope was then justified. He had my consent, and my father did not object. But fate had otherwise decreed. The author of 'Waverley' is the evil genius who prevents our union and causes our unhappiness."

"The devil he does!" cried Alexis, starting back.

"Alas! good cousin," continued Emily, sentimentally, "who knows how the threads of our destiny are spun!"

"They are not spun in the study at Abbotsford, at any rate," cried the impetuous Alexis. "But it is all gibberish to me. Our neighbours beyond the Channel have certainly sometimes had a finger in our affairs, but I never knew till now that their novelist's permission was essential to the marriage of a Miffelstein maiden and a Miffelstein attorney. But——"

He was interrupted by Tobias, who threw open the door with much unnecessary noise, and thrust in his head with an ominous winking of his eyes, and a finger upon his lips. The next moment the inn-keeper entered the room.

Alexis found his uncle grown old, but he was more particularly struck by his strange stiff manners, which resembled those of Caleb, but were more remarkable in the master than the servant, by reason of the solemn and magnificent style in which they were manifested. Herr Wirtig welcomed his nephew with infinite dignity; let fall a few words of censure with reference to his flight from home, a few others of approbation of his return, and inquired concerning the young man's present plans and occupations.

"I am an architect and engineer," replied Alexis. "My assiduity has won me friends; I have learnt my craft under good masters, and have done my best to complete my education during my travels in Italy, France, and England."

"England?" cried Wirtig, pricking his ears at the word. "Did you visit Scotland?"

With a suppressed smile, Alexis replied in the negative. His uncle shrugged his shoulders with an air of pity. "And what prospects have you?" he inquired.

"Prince Hector of Rauchpfeifenheim has given me a lucrative appointment in his dominions. Before assuming its duties, I have come to pass a few days here, and trust I am welcome."

Wirtig shook his nephew's hand.

"Welcome you are!" said he, kindly. "Hospitality is the attribute of the noblest races. So

long it please ye, remain under this poor roof. By the honour of a cavalier! I would gladly have you with me in the spring, when I think of rebuilding my house on a very different plan. You will find many changes here, kinsman Alexis. Come, fill your glass. A health to the Great Unknown! He has been my good genius. But we will talk of that on our way to the harvest-feast."

The innkeeper's conversation on the road to the hamlet, where the festival was held, was in complete accordance with Caleb's account of his vagaries. He was perfectly mad on the subject of the author of 'Waverley.' Never had human being, whether sage, poet, or philosopher, made so extraordinary an impression on an admirer as had the poet of Abbotsford on the host of the Star—now the Bear of Bradwardine. Wirtig identified himself with all the most striking characters of the Scottish novels. He assumed the tone by turns of a stern Presbyterian, a gossiping and eccentric antiquary, a haughty noble, an enthusiastic royalist, a warlike Highland chief. His intense study of the Waverley Novels, at a time when he was much shaken by his wife's sudden death, had warped his mind upon this particular subject. Combined with this monomania was a feeling of boundless gratitude to the Scottish bard for the prosperity the inn had enjoyed under the auspices of the Blessed Bear. His portrait hung in the dining-room, where his birthday was

annually celebrated. Wirtig scarcely ever emptied a glass but to his health, or uttered a sentence without garnishing it with his favourite oaths and expressions. In his hour of sorrow, the honest German had made himself a new world out of the novelist's creations. The sorrow faded away, but the illusion remained. And Wirtig deeply resented every attempt to destroy it. Emily's lover, Elben, a thriving young attorney, had dared to attack the daily increasing folly of his future father-in-law, and had boldly taken the field against his Scottish idol. He paid dearly for his temerity. Argument sharpened into irony, and irony led to a quarrel, whose consequence was a sentence of banishment from the territory of the Clan Wirtig, pronounced against the unlucky lover, who then heartily bewailed his rashness—the more so that, whilst he himself was excluded from the presence of his mistress, he was kept in constant alarm lest some one of the numerous English visitors to the Bear of Bradwardine should seduce her affections, and bear her off to his island. In vain did he endeavour, through mutual friends, to mollify Scott's furious partisan; in vain did Emily, in secret concert with her lover, exert all her powers of coaxing. At last Wirtig declared he would no longer oppose their union when Elben should have atoned for his crime by presenting him with a novel from his own pen, written in the exact style of that stupendous genius

whom the rash attorney had dared to vilify. Elben was horrified at this condition, but nevertheless, remembering that love works miracles, and has even been known to make a tolerable painter out of a blacksmith, he did not despair. He shut himself up with a complete edition of the Waverley novels, read and re-read, wrote, altered, corrected, and finally tore up his manuscripts. A hundred times he was on the point of abandoning the task in despair; a hundred times, stimulated by the promised recompense, he resumed his pen. But his labour was fruitless. A year elapsed; he had consumed sundry reams of paper, bottles of ink, and pounds of canaster; the result was *nil*. The time allowed him expired at the approaching Christmas. Poor Emily's cheeks had lost their roses through anxiety and suspense. The Miffelstein gossips pitied her, abused her father, and laughed at Elben.

These latter details did not reach Alexis through either his uncle or his cousin. The former, on casual mention of the attorney's name, looked as grim as the most truculent Celt that ever carried claymore; in her father's presence Emily—or Amy, as the Scotomaniac now called her—dared not even allude to her lover. Elben himself, whom Alexis encountered gliding like a pale and melancholy ghost amidst the throng of holiday-makers, confided to his former school-mate the story of his woes. Alexis alternately pitied and laughed at him.

"Poor fellow!" said he, "how can I help you? I am no novelist, to write your book for you, nor yet a magnificent barbarian from the Scottish hills, to snatch your mistress from her father's tyranny and bear her to your arms amidst the soft melodies of the bagpipe. I see nothing for it but to give her up."

Elben looked indignant at the cold-blooded suggestion.

"You do not understand these matters," said he, with an expression of disdain.

"Possibly not," replied Alexis, "but only reflect—you a romance-writer!"

Elben sighed. "True," he said, "it is a hopeless case. How many nights have I not sat in the moonlight upon the ruins of the old castle, to try and catch a little inspiration. I never caught anything but a cold. How many times have I stolen disguised into the lowest pot-houses, where it would ruin my reputation to be recognised, to acquire the popular phraseology. And yet I am no further advanced than a year ago!"

To the considerable relief of Alexis, the despairing lover was here interrupted by the explosion of two little mortars; a shower of squibs and rockets flew through the air, and the women crowded together in real or affected terror. In the rush, the two friends were separated, and Alexis again found himself by the side of old Wirtig, who was soothing

the alarm of his timorous daughter. "Fear nothing, good Amy," he said; "danger there is none." Then turning to Alexis: "Cousin!" said he, solemnly, "by our dear Lady of Embrun! yon was a report! the loudest ever made by mortar. The explosion of the steamboat which yesterday blew Prince Hector of Rauchpfeifenheim and his whole court into the air, could scarcely have been louder."

"Nay, nay," said Alexis, "things were not quite as bad as that. Rumour has exaggerated, as usual. No one was blown into the air—no one even wounded. The steamboat which the prince had launched on the lake near his capital was certainly lost, in consequence of the badness of the machinery. But the prince and all on board had left the vessel in good time. The slight service it was my good fortune to render, by taking off Prince Hector in a swift row-boat, doubtless procured me, more than any particular abilities of mine, my appointment as his Royal Highness's architect."

The bystanders looked with redoubled respect at the man thus preferred by the popular sovereign of the adjacent State. The sentimental Emily lisped her congratulations. Her father shook his nephew vehemently by the hand.

"By St Dunstan! kinsman," he cried, "it was well done, and I dare swear thou art as brave a lad as ever handled oar! Give me the packet of squibs;

Amy, thou shalt see me fire one in honour of thy cousin Alexis !”

The firework, unskilfully thrown, lodged in the coat-skirts of a stout broad-shouldered man in a round hat and a long brown surtout, who was elbowing his way through the crowd. The stranger, evidently a foreigner, strove furiously against the hissing sputtering projectile, and at last succeeded in throwing it under his feet and trampling it out with his heavy boot-soles. Then, brandishing a formidable walking-cane, and grumbling most ominously, he began to work his way, as fast as a slight lameness in one of his feet permitted, to the place where Wirtig was blowing his match and preparing for another explosion. Emily called her father's attention to the stranger's hostile demonstrations, but the valiant host of the Bear of Bradwardine heeded them not. From time immemorial, he said, it had been use and custom at Miffelstein harvest-home to burn people's clothes with squibs, and he certainly should not, in the year of grace 1827, set an example of deviation from so venerable a practice. When, however, he distinguished some well-known English oaths issuing from the stranger's lips—and when Caleb came up and whispered in his ear that the traveller had alighted at the Bear, and, finding himself lonely, had demanded to be conducted to the festival—the worthy innkeeper regretted that he had directed his broadside against the stern of a

natural ally, and seemed disposed to make due and cordial apology. After some cursing and grumbling in English, the stranger's wrath was appeased, and in a sort of Anglo-German jargon, he declared himself satisfied. He said some civil things to Emily, took a seat by her side, abused the squib and rocket practice, praised his host's wine, and made himself at home. Wirtig's attention seemed greatly engrossed by the new-comer, whom he examined with the corner of his eye, taking no further part in the diversions of the festival, and quite omitting to observe the furtive glances exchanged between his daughter and Elben, who lurked in the vicinity.

Presently Alexis, who had been overwhelmed by the greetings of old acquaintances and playmates, returned to his uncle's party. He started at sight of the Englishman.

"How now!" he exclaimed; "you here, my good sir? By what chance?"

The stranger evidently shared the young man's surprise at their meeting. Hastily quitting his seat, he took Alexis by the arm, and led him out of the throng. At a short distance off, but out of all earshot, Wirtig saw them walking up and down, the Englishman talking and gesticulating with great earnestness, Alexis listening with smiling attention. The host of the Bear sat in deep thought, his eyes riveted upon the Englishman.

"Caleb," he suddenly demanded of the old waiter, who was moistening his larynx with a mug of

cider—"Caleb, how came yon gentleman to our hostelry?"

"On horseback, Master Wirtig," replied Caleb, mustering up his reminiscences of the 'Tales of my Landlord,' "on a gallant bay gelding. His honour wore spatterdashes, such as they wear to hunt the fox, I believe, in his country. His cane hung from his button; and if it so please ye, Master Wirtig, I will describe his horse-furniture as well as my poor old memory will permit."

"Enough!" said Wirtig, impatiently. "Whence comes the traveller, and whither is he bound?"

Caleb shrugged his shoulders.

"Has he written his name in the strangers' book?"

"He has so, Master Wirtig, after long entreaty; for at first he steadfastly refused. At last he wrote it. 'Let none see this,' he said, 'save your master; and let *him* be discreet, or——'"

"Glorious!" interrupted Wirtig, and, in the joy of his heart, was near embracing his astonished servant. "I had a presentiment of it; but say—his name?"

Caleb looked embarrassed. "You alone were to see it, Master Wirtig, and I—you know I am not very good at reading writing. I looked into the book, but——"

"How looked the word, fellow?"

"To me it looked a good deal like a blot."

"Now, by St Bennet of Seyton! thou art the

dullest knave that ever wore green apron! How many letters?"

Caleb scratched his head. "Hard to say exactly; but not more than five, I would wager that."

"FIVE! Varlet, thou rejoicest me. Heavens! that such good fortune should be mine! Run, man, run as you never ran before! Bid Jenny kill, roast, and boil! A great supper! Scottish cookery! The oak-table shall groan with its load of sack, ale, and whisky. Let Quentin put the horses to, and fetch us with the carriage. Rob Roy must go round to all the best houses, and invite the neighbours. Tell Rowena to leave the goats, and help Jenny in the kitchen. By my halidome! I had almost forgotten. Old Edith must sweep out the ball-room, and Front-de-Bœuf put wax-lights in the chandeliers. Go! run! fly!"

Caleb disappeared. In his place came a crowd of the innkeeper's friends and gossips. "What now? What is up?" was asked on all sides. And Wirtig exultingly replied—"A feast! a banquet! such as the walls of the Bear of Bradwardine never yet beheld. For they are this day honoured by the presence of the most welcome guest that ever trod the streets of Miffelstein. Wine shall flow like water, and there's welcome to all the world."

Breaking through the inquisitive throng, Wirtig hurried to meet Alexis, who was now returning alone from his mysterious conference with the stranger.

"Well?" cried the uncle, with beaming countenance and expanded eyes.

"Well?" coolly replied the nephew.

"Is it he, or is it not?"

"Who?"

"Who? Now, by the soul of St Edward! thou hast sworn to drive me mad. You say you have not been in Scotland? Was it in Paris you knew him? Or do you think I am blind? Is not that his noble Scottish countenance? the high cheek-bones—the sharp grey eyes—the large mouth, and the bold expression? And then the lame foot, and five letters! What would you have more?"

"Really, uncle, I would have nothing more."

"Obstinate fellow! you will explain nothing! But the portrait, the face, the five letters—your mystery is useless—the secret is out—the stranger is—Scott!"

"Scott!" cried Alexis, greatly surprised. "How do you know that?"

"Enough! I know it. 'Tis the Great Unknown! Shame on you, Alexis, to try to deceive your uncle! Tell the great man, with whom you, unworthy that you are, have been so fortunate as to make acquaintance, that his *incognito* shall be respected, as surely as I bear an English heart in my bosom. By the rood, shall it! For all Miffelstein he shall be the Unknown. But I crave his good leave to celebrate his coming."

"I will answer for his making no objection," replied Alexis, who apparently struggled with some inward emotion, for his voice was tremulous, his face very red, and his eyes were steadfastly fixed on the toes of his boots.

"Answer for yourself, Sir Architect!" said his uncle, somewhat sharply. Then, in a lower and confidential tone, "Where is the immortal genius?" he inquired.

"If I mistake not," replied Alexis, "I see him yonder, eating curds and pumpernickel."

"Ah, the great man!" ejaculated Wirtig; "to condescend to food so unworthy of his illustrious jaws. And see, he is about to fire off the mortar! Engaging familiarity! Boom! The loudest report to-day! The piece is mine, though it cost me a thousand florins! It shall be christened Walter Scott!"

"Hush, hush!" interposed Alexis; "if you go on in this way, the *incognito* will be in danger. And he himself must not perceive that you——"

"True!" interrupted the excited Wirtig, clapping his hand on his lips. "Ah, could I but speak Gaelic, or even English, the better to commune with the inspired bard! But he has translated 'Goetz von Berlichingen,' so must understand the pure German of Miffelstein. But now tell me, Alexis, in strict confidence, how comes the first of the world's poets in our poor village? Has he, perchance, heard of the Bear of Bradwardine, and of his faithful clans-

man, John Jacob Wirtig? Or does he seek subject for a new romance, and propose to place his hero at Miffelstein, as he conducted Durward to Plessis-les-Tours, and the brave knight Kenneth to Palestine?"

"Neither the one nor the other, my dear uncle, unfortunately for us," replied Alexis, thoughtfully, and pausing between his sentences. "Trusting to your discretion, and to convince you of its necessity, I will not conceal from you that a great peril has brought the author of 'Waverley' to Miffelstein. You must know that he has just published an historical romance, in which, availing himself of the novelist's licence, he has represented Charlemagne and Henry the Fourth of France vanquished in single combat by William Wallace and Robert the Bruce. A French general, taking offence at this, has insisted upon his retracting the statement, or fighting a duel with blunderbusses at six paces. Of course a man of honour cannot retract——"

"Of course not! Never did Scottish chief so demean himself! I see it all. The —— Unknown has shot the general, and——"

"On the contrary, uncle. He does not want to be shot by the general, and that is why he is here, where none will look for him."

"What!" cried the host of the Bear, taken very much aback; "but that looks almost like — like a weakness, unknown to his heroes, who so readily bare their blades! I scarcely understand how——"

"You misapprehend me," interrupted Alexis: "the Baronet only asks to put off the duel until he has finished a dozen novels, each in three volumes, which he has in progress. And as the Vandal refuses to wait——"

"I see it all!" cried Wirtig, perfectly satisfied; "the Unknown is right. What! the base Frenchman would rob the world of twelve master-pieces! Not so. In Miffelstein is safe hiding for the Genius of his century. *Montjoie*, and to the rescue! Let him wrap himself in his plaid, and fear no foe! I will cover him with my target, and my life shall answer for his! Where should he find refuge if not in the shadow of the Bear?"

Meanwhile, taking advantage of Wirtig's relaxed vigilance, Elben had stolen to Emily's side.

"What is the matter with your father to-day?" said the love-sick attorney to his mistress, when Wirtig and Alexis walked away in the direction of the mortar, and the crowd that had assembled round the host of the Bear dispersed, laughing and shaking their heads. "What new crotchet possesses him, and whence comes his extraordinary excitement and exultation?"

Emily pressed her lover's hand, and the tears stood in her sentimental blue eyes.

"William," she said, "I greatly fear that all is over with our dearest hopes. I am oppressed with a presentiment of misfortune. My father is about

to execute an oft-repeated threat. He will force me to wed another!"

"Whom?" cried the unfortunate lawyer, his hair standing on end with alarm: "surely not that rattlepate Alexis? The relationship is too near, and the canon forbids."

"You mistake me, William," replied Emily; "I mean the Englishman. My father's strange agitation—his boundless joy—certain hints that he has let fall—I am convinced he has discovered in this stranger some rich son-in-law, for whom he had written to England."

"You pierce my very heart!" plaintively exclaimed Elben. "Unhappy day! Accursed festival, date of my last hope's annihilation! How all this merriment grates upon my soul! So might the condemned soldier feel marching to execution to the sound of joyous music!"

"William! William! what frightful images!" sobbed Emily from behind her handkerchief.

"Romance! poetry!" continued the incensed attorney; "now, indeed, might I hope to compose some tragic history which should thrill each reader's heart. Despair not, dearest Emily. There is still justice upon earth. I will bring an action against your father. Or perhaps—from this to the New Year there is yet time to invent tales and write volumes. As to yonder lame foreigner, I will try some other plan with him. By the by, who he knows if

has got a passport? I don't think he has, by his looks. Respectable people do not travel about on horseback. I must find out what he is, and his name."

And Elben was moving off, to commence his investigations, but Emily detained him.

"Such means are unworthy your noble nature, my William," she said. "In your cooler moments you will assuredly reject them."

Elben shrugged his shoulders. "At your command," he said, "even stern Themis would drop the sword. But what can I do? Must I resort to a pistol-ball, or to prussic acid, as sole exit from my misery? That would be unbusinesslike, very unbefitting a respectable attorney. Nor would it rescue you from persecution."

"Is there no way out of this labyrinth?" said Emily, pensively, apparently little apprehensive of her lover's resorting to suicide. "No flight from the clutches of this odious foreigner?"

"Flight!" repeated Elben, catching at the word. "What a bold idea!"

"Realise it," said Emily, speaking low and very quickly. "Run away with me!"

The attorney started.

"*Raptus!*" he exclaimed. "Dearest, what do you propose? The law punishes such an act. The third chapter of our criminal code——"

"You have little chivalry in your nature," in-

interrupted Emily, reproachfully. "You are no Douglas! Leave me, then, to my fate. Alas, poor Emily! to be thus sacrificed ere thy twenty-second summer has fled!"

"Twenty-second!" cried the prosaic lawyer, unheeding the implied inferiority to the Douglas; "there is something in that. I knew not you were of age. You have a right to decline the paternal authority. That alters the case entirely. Since you have completed your one-and-twentieth year, an elopement is less perilous."

The lovers' colloquy was here interrupted by the arrival of Wirtig, accompanied by his nephew and the Englishman. The festival approached its close, and Wirtig, at last missing his daughter, and hearing that she was with Elben, hurried in great alarm to seek her. He was accompanied in his search by Alexis and the lame stranger, who conversed in English.

"Is the innkeeper mad?" inquired the latter. "Does he want to borrow money of me? Or what is he driving at?"

"He merely desires to make himself agreeable to you," replied Alexis.

"The devil take his agreeableness. I hate such fawning ways. You know the unfortunate motive of my visit to Miffelstein. In my position, compliments and ceremony are quite out of place."

"You must nevertheless endure them. They

insure your safety. For a few days you must be content to pass for a great man."

"There's none such in my family."

"No matter. Greatness is thrust upon you. Try to persuade yourself that you are the great Scottish Unknown."

"Never heard of him. What has he done?"

"He has written romances."

"Pshaw! I hate your scribblers. For heaven's sake, don't say I am an author."

"Unfortunately I have said so already. For your own sake, beware of contradicting me. It is most unfortunate that you forgot your passport. If Prince Hector of Rauchpfeifenheim learns that you are at Miffelstein, you are no safer here than in his capital."

"Curse my luck," growled the Englishman between his teeth, "and confound all smiths and boiler-makers! Had I but remained in Old England! There, if a boiler does burst, money and a letter in the paper will make all right. But the Continent is worse than a slave-market. No *habeas corpus* here! A foreigner is no better than an outlaw, and if an accident occurs, he has no bail but leg-bail."

"It is certainly very wrong of the prince to be angry at such a trifle. You were only within a hair's-breadth of drowning him and his whole court. However, it is for you to choose whether or not I shall say who you really are."

"Not ! certainly not ! To get out of this scrape, I would consent to pass for a Yankee. By all means let me be your Unknown friend."

"You shall," said Alexis, laughing ; "but on one condition. You must assist me to bring about the happiness of two deserving persons."

"Cost any money?" inquired the stranger, suspiciously.

"Not a kreuzer. A few fair words, which I will teach you."

"I am willing. What is to be done? Who are the persons?"

"That pretty girl you were sitting by just now, and her lover, a worthy young man."

"But I do not know him."

"Not necessary."

"Whatever you like, if it costs me neither liberty nor money. Though I would give all the money in my pocket for a scrap of passport. Cursed Continent ! In my country, we don't know such things. Had I only—but in my haste to escape the gendarmes, I forgot everything."

It was at this point of the conversation, carried on in English, and therefore unintelligible to Wirtig, that the innkeeper pounced upon his daughter and her lover.

"How now, attorney !" he exclaimed ; "what means this? By St Julian of Avenel ! who permitted you to walk with my daughter? *Tête Dieu !*

let it be for the last time! I trust thee not, attorney. But this is a happy day, and you shall not be excluded from the banquet in honour of our distinguished visitor. You will be welcome at the Bear of Bradwardine. And what you there shall see and hear will quickly rid you of your prejudices against——"

Alexis trod on the foot of his garrulous uncle. Elben looked daggers at the Englishman. Emily smiled, and sighed.

"Now, your lordship, if it so please ye," quoth Wirtig, in huge delight, "we will return to my poor house. The sun is below the horizon, and the evening dews might endanger your precious health. My forgetful Caleb has assuredly forgotten to send us the carriage."

"I am ready," replied the stranger. "I have had enough and to spare of your rocket practice, and your music makes my head ache."

"The bagpipes are certainly pleasanter to the ear," said Wirtig, submissively, "and I am grieved that I forgot to command Caleb's attendance with them. Pardon the omission. At the house, things shall be better managed. Amy, entertain Sir Wal——"

A crushing application of Alexis' boot-heel to Wirtig's tenderest toe, substituted an exclamation of agony for the second syllable of the forbidden name. The Englishman offered Emily his arm, and a signal from her father compelled its acceptance. By the

light of torches, and preceded by a band of music, the Miffelsteiners now moved in long procession homewards, forming a sort of escort for the stranger, who was in front, attended by Wirtig and Alexis. The attorney marched close behind, glaring like a hyena at his supposed rival. Amidst the cracking of fireworks, and the reports of guns and pistols, the procession reached the town, and a considerable number of the men went direct to the hotel of the Bear—some eager to profit by the gratuitous good cheer, and others yet more desirous to ascertain its motive. Of this, however, most of Wirtig's guests were by this time aware. Rumours will arise, in small towns as in large cities; and thus it was that at Miffelstein twenty busy tongues whispered the presence of the Great Unknown. At the Bear, Wirtig's liberal instructions had been zealously executed. Caleb, Rowena, Jenny, Front-de-Bœuf, and the rest of the household, had done their duty. The table was loaded with English and Scottish delicacies; the portrait of the Great Unknown—its frame adorned with lamps of many colours—stared somewhat wildly, but, upon the whole, benevolently, from the wall, doubtless well satisfied to see its original doing ample honour to the repast. The appetites of the other guests, which ungratified curiosity might have damped, were sharpened by a confidential communication from the host of the Bear. Notwithstanding his nephew's injunctions to secrecy,

Wirtig could not refrain from exhibiting to his friends, before they sat down to supper, and of course in the strictest confidence, the name of W. SCOTT, inscribed upon the last page of the strangers' book. There was no mistaking the characters, blotted and strangely formed though they were. Great were the awe and reverence with which the Miffelsteiners contemplated the stranger, who, for his part, gave his chief attention to his supper. He bolted beefsteaks, reduced fowls to skeletons, and poured down, with infinite gusto, bumper after bumper of Burgundy and Hochheimer. The guests remarked with admiration that he avoided, doubtless with a view to the preservation of his *incognito*, the Scottish drinks and dishes that adorned the board. He affected disgust at a Miffelstein haggis, and neglected the whisky-bottle for the wines of France and Germany. Once he was observed to smile as he glanced at his portrait, and it was inferred that he was amused at the badness of the likeness, which certainly did little credit to the artist. But he made no remark, excepting that, the next moment, he requested his neighbour to pass him a dish of pork with plum-sauce.

Wirtig's discretion was far from equalling that of the Unknown. Seated beside his honoured guest, in the joy of his heart he overwhelmed him with compliments, made countless allusions to his works and

genius, and kept his glass constantly full. The stranger let him talk on, and answered nothing, or only by monosyllables. In proportion to the flattery and attentions lavished by Wirtig, were the sadness and sullenness of Elben the attorney. He had arrived later than the other guests. Seated at one end of the table, he looked Medusas at the Unknown.

"What think you, nephew," said Wirtig, aside, "if I were to send for Amy and her harp to entertain our illustrious visitor? The bagpipes he has forbidden."

"An excellent thought," replied Alexis; "but it cannot be, for Caleb tells me that my cousin has retired to her apartment, complaining of a violent headache."

"Mere woman's fancies!" grumbled the father. "Amy is no *Die Vernon*. Did the girl but know whom our roof this day shelters—*St George of Burgundy*! how gladly would she come! How warm would be her welcome of him she is bound to love and reverence!"

Elben overheard these last words, and smiled a grim smile. Owing to his tardy arrival and mental preoccupation, he was unaware of the real motive of the attentions paid to the stranger, and still believed him to be a favoured candidate for the hand of Emily.

The Unknown had finished his pork and plums, and was resting on his knife and fork.

"Where is Miss Amy?" said he, at last, looking particularly tender, either at thoughts of the young lady or at sight of a dish of partridges just then placed smoking before him. The jealous attorney could stand it no longer. Starting from his chair, he rushed from the room.

Wirtig apologised for his daughter's absence, and resumed his complimentary strain.

"By our lady of Cléry, noble sir!" he said, "the productions of your genius have delighted my understanding, and made my house to prosper. I am under the greatest obligations to you, and my debt of gratitude is doubled by the honour of your visit. I pray you to command me in all things."

The stranger seemed embarrassed by this excessive homage. Just then Alexis spoke a few words to him in English. The Unknown emptied his glass, laid his finger thoughtfully on his nose, and, after a minute's pause, turned to his entertainer.

"You consider yourself under obligations to me?" he said. "I take you at your word. Prove your sincerity."

"In purse and person, hand and heart, command me," cried Wirtig, "Lord of the Isles and most honourable baronet. Do you lack money? What I have is yours. Do you desire protection from the bloodthirsty Frenchman? In my house you shall find shelter. In your defence, I and mine will don tartan, gird claymore, and shoulder Lochaber axe."

"You are a gentleman," said the Englishman, looking rather puzzled, "and I thank you for your goodwill, but have no need of your money. The favour I would ask is not for myself, but for others. Consent to your daughter's marriage with the man of her choice. You will do me a great pleasure."

"Ha!" quoth the mystified Wirtig, "blows the wind from that quarter? The sly puss has enlisted a powerful ally. *Pasques Dieu!* 'Tis a mere trifle you ask, worshipful sir. I had gladly seen you tax my gratitude more largely."

"Consent without delay," whispered Alexis to his uncle. "Let not the great man think you hesitate."

"With all my heart," said Wirtig. "I had certainly made a condition, and would gladly—but will Amy be happy with the prosaic attorney?"

Once more the Great Unknown laid his finger solemnly upon his nose. "Undoubtedly," he said, tossing off another bumper of his host's best Burgundy. He spoke rather thick, and his eyes had a fixed and glassy look. "Undoubtedly," he repeated, as if speaking to himself. Just then Caleb and Front-de-Bœuf placed a fresh battery of bottles on table and sideboard. "Upon my soul," added the stranger, in English, "this old tavern-keeper is a jolly fellow, and his Burgundy is prime." He nodded oracularly, and again filled his glass.

"Listen to him!" said Alexis to his uncle, who

hung upon each sound that issued from his idol's lips. "He prophesies! The second-sight is upon him! He foretells their happiness. Consent at once!"

"The second-sight!" exclaimed Wirtig, reverently. "Nay, then, in heaven's name, be it as he wishes! I freely give my consent!"

Alexis would fain have left the room to seek Elben, and inform him of his good fortune; but his uncle would not spare him. The Englishman continued to imbibe the Burgundy, the other guests zealously followed his example, conviviality was at its height, songs were sung, and the evening wore on. During a tumultuous chorus of hurrahs, elicited by an impromptu allusion to the guest of the evening, introduced by the Miffelstein poet into a bacchanalian ditty, Caleb entered the room with an important countenance, and beckoned Alexis from the table. A foreigner, he said, who spoke more French than German, was making anxious inquiries about one Schott or Scott, and insisted upon seeing the landlord. At first somewhat staggered by this intelligence, which threatened destruction to his schemes, the ready-witted architect soon hit upon a remedy. Sending Caleb to announce to the stranger his master's speedy appearance, he called Wirtig aside.

"Uncle," he said, "the moment for decisive action has arrived. The French general is below.

He is on the track of the Great Unknown, and insists that he is here. Keep him at bay for a while, and I will contrive the escape of your illustrious guest. Above all, parley not with the false Frenchman."

"Ha ! Beauséant !" exclaimed the valorous and enthusiastic Wirtig. "Is it indeed so ? Methinks there will be cut-and-thrust work ere the proud Norman reach his prey. Ha ! St Andrew ! he shall have a right Scottish answer. And though he were the bravest knight that ever put foot in stirrup——"

"Expend not the precious moments in similes," interrupted Alexis. "Remember only that the man is glib of tongue, and let him not mislead you by friendly professions."

"Not I, by the soul of Hereward !" replied Wirtig, leaving the room.

Alexis hastened to the Englishman.

"You must be off, my good sir," he said. "A detachment of the body-guard of Prince Hector of Rauchpfeifenheim is in pursuit of you. Their officer is in the house, making clamorous inquiry."

"The devil he is !" cried the stranger, sobered by the intelligence. "What is to be done ? The horse I came upon is foundered. Infernal country ! Accursed steamboat ! I cannot leave the place on foot."

"Leave the house, at any rate," said Alexis,

"and we will then see what to do. Delay another minute, and escape is impossible. Follow me, as you love liberty and life."

The Englishman obeyed. Alexis led the way into a back-room, threw open a window, and stepped out upon a balcony, whence a flight of steps descended into the garden of the hotel. This was quickly traversed, and the two men reached a narrow and solitary lane, formed by stables and garden-walls, and close to the outskirts of the town. Ten paces off stood a post-chaise, the door open and the steps down.

"Now then, sir," said the driver in a sleepy voice, as they approached his vehicle, "Jump in. No time to lose."

"How fortunate!" said the Englishman, "here is a carriage."

"But not for you, is it?" said Alexis.

The Englishman laughed, and clapped his hand on his pocket.

"Everything for money. Drive on, postilion, and at a gallop. A double *trinkgeld* for you."

And he jumped into the vehicle, which instantly drove off, and had disappeared round a corner before Alexis, astonished by the suddenness of the proceeding, had time to reciprocate the farewell shouted to him by the fugitive. He was about to re-enter the garden, when a man came running down the lane. It was Elben.

"How now, William," cried Alexis, "what do you here?"

"The post-chaise," cried the attorney, "where is it?"

"The post-chaise, was it for you?"

"To be sure."

"It has just driven off with the Englishman."

"With the Englishman!" gasped Elben. "Destruction! And Emily in it!"

"Emily! my cousin! The devil! What do you mean?"

"Alexis, you are my friend—with you I need not dissemble. That carriage was to bear me and Emily from her father's tyranny. I put her into it ten minutes ago. She insisted I should be armed, and I returned for these!"

And throwing open his cloak, he exhibited a pair of enormous horse-pistols, and a rapier, which, from its antiquated fashion, might have belonged to a contemporary of the Great Frederick.

"And whilst you were arming," cried the incorrigible Alexis, convulsed with laughter, "the Great Unknown ran off with your bride. Well, you may rely he will not take her far. He is in too great haste to escape, to encumber himself with baggage. And you will be spared a journey, for my uncle no longer opposes your marriage."

At that moment the garden-door opened, and Emily stood before them. No sooner had the

romantic damsel sent her knight to arm himself, than she remembered an indispensable condition of an elopement, which she had forgotten to observe, and hurried back to her apartment, to leave upon her table a line addressed to her father, deprecating his wrath, and pleading the irresistible force of love. A few words from Alexis gave her and Elben the joyful assurance that no obstacle now barred their union.

On re-entering the inn, Alexis encountered a French equerry of Prince Hector of Rauchpfeifenheim, who at once recognised him as his sovereign's newly-appointed architect.

"Ah, *Monsieur l'Architecte*," he exclaimed, "how delighted I am to meet with a sane man! The people here are stark mad, and persist in knowing nothing of Scott, the engineer. I know very well he is here. Tell the drunken dog that the prince forgives him. I have ordered his baggage to be sent hither, and here is money for his expenses. The prince never seriously intended to visit upon him the fault of his bad machinery."

Alexis undertook to transmit Prince Hector's bounty and pardon, and was enabled to take his uncle the joyful intelligence that the bloodthirsty French general had departed in peace.

Elben and Emily were married. Alexis forwarded the property of the Great Unknown, and soon

afterwards left Miffelstein. Wirtig wondered to hear nothing more of his illustrious visitor and benefactor, when one day a letter reached him, bearing the London post-mark, and scrawled in execrable German. Its contents were as follows :—

“DEAR SIR,—Once more back in Old England, which I ought never to have left, I remit you the enclosed note in discharge of my reckoning. Before this, you will doubtless have discovered who your Great Unknown really was, and that his business is with pistons and paddlewheels, not with novels and romances. My best regards to that merry fellow Alexis, and to your sentimental little daughter. And you, my comical old friend, have my best wishes for your welfare and prosperity.

WILLIAM SCOTT.”

When Wirtig had read this epistle, he remained for some time plunged in thought. From that day forward he left off novel-reading, and attended to his business; called Caleb Tobias; eschewed bag-piping and Scottish cookery; consigned plaid-curtains, oaken sideboards, and portraits of the Great Unknown to the lumber-room; and before the New Year arrived, the Blessed Bear of Bradwardine had disappeared from the door, and the thirsty wayfarer might once more drink his glass by the light of the jolly old Star.

THE EASTER TRIP OF TWO OCHLOPHOBISTS.¹

BY ONE OF THEMSELVES.

[MAGA. JULY AND AUGUST 1867.]

PREFACE.

I HAVE read so many books of travels lately, and have found them so amusing and instructive, that I cannot resist the temptation of endeavouring to sketch the fortnight which I spent under very peculiar circumstances last month. The course of reading through which I have been has, I am afraid, a little affected my style, which naturally is a simple, unaffected, and pleasing one.

I must not forget to own the obligations I am under to Granville, who was good enough to write the greater part of this account.

HENRY STUART.

LONDON, 14th May.

¹ Not a fossil, but belonging to the recent period—"a hater of drums, squashes, or parties"—ὄχλος, φοβὸς.

MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE OCHLOPHOBISTS' EASTER TRIP.



+ Indicates the buffets where the ochlophobists refreshed themselves.

* The place where the ochlophobists recognised one another.

Towns in capital letters, "LIÈGE," denote the places where the ochlophobists stayed to have their clothes washed.

Towns printed in italics "*Spa*," indicate that the ochlophobists changed circular notes there.

CHAPTER I.

THE RAILWAY.

Dedicated to H. E. L. J——M.

Any observant person who took the trouble to look, on the eleventh day of April, into the fifth carriage of the train which left Charing Cross at — A.M., might have seen me. I was sitting with my feet upon the opposite seat, and a newspaper half cut was resting upon my knees. I am very fond of reflection, and on that particular occasion I was reflecting—firstly, why the —— I had left London; and secondly, why I was going abroad; and thirdly, whether I had taken a sufficient number of pairs of boots with me. I enjoyed my attitude. I know very few so pleasant—that perfect ease which is the concomitant of such a horizontal position as I have tried to describe—that disregard of things sublunary, and that subjective selfishness which is so often to be found in our characters; for selfishness is certainly a by no means rare condition—*mais revenons à nos moutons*. There were others in the same carriage, and I felt painfully certain that sooner or later I should be obliged to answer something to them. An oldish man of between sixty and seventy was engaged in tearing to pieces some tough ham-sandwiches, which were

being produced by his daughter from a dirty basket.

"Will you have another?"

"Thanks," was the answer, and I shuddered. I am naturally shy, and I could not conceive how anybody could eat in a railway carriage, so I shuddered.

"You are cold, sir."

It had come at last, and I was obliged to make an observation.

"I am," I answered; and thrusting the newspaper over my head, I feigned sleep to avoid conversation. What a strange love, it appears to me, to be perpetually wishing to make new acquaintances, as if one's present ones did not bore one sufficiently! I felt I agreed with the man who, on being asked by his host whether he would go and see Stonehenge, replied, "Thanks, but I don't wish to know any more new people." The man who wishes to be remembered after the cessation of an acquaintance for a year is a bore—the man who introduces himself after he has grown a beard, and when really there is no conceivable reason for remembering him, is a bore. I think the reason I left London was that there were so many bores, and perhaps I hoped after a fortnight some of them might have forgotten me.

"Will you lend me the 'Times,' sir?" and I discovered a foolish-looking young man asking me for

my means of salvation—*i.e.*, the newspaper. He had a white hat on—nobody but a thoroughly impudent man can wear a white hat in April—a muddy complexion, and a vacillating grin. I gave him the paper, although I felt that by doing so I was opening out an indefinite field for his remarks. As I looked at his self-contented features, I began to have horrible misgivings as to having seen him only a few days before at Lady A.'s—he was just the sort of man to remember having met me there—probably bumped me, or upset my plate at supper; and what if he intended to take precisely the same direction as myself, and I should find him every morning and every evening at the *table-d'hôte*? Yes, when he had finished the account of the last steeple-chase, he would introduce himself. I once knew a woman who, wanting to get people to go to her ball, went up to somebody in the street, and said, "I think I have met you in church." I recollected, too, I had been at my dentist's lately, and that I was kept waiting with another man for a quarter of an hour—was it he? My reflections were disturbed by an old woman who put the point of her umbrella upon my neighbour's foot, and said, "Dear me, how awkward these carriages are! there's no room for anything. I tell my husband every day to write to the 'Times' to have them made bigger—it's very odd—they don't care."

This was no relief; I was evidently next to some

great statesman's wife. Would she be next to me at the *table-d'hôte* every day also? The first time I went abroad, being, as I have said before, very shy, I dined in my bedroom; but as it was *au cinquième*, I outraged my feelings in a few days, and came down-stairs.

"I beg your pardon," said the old lady, as her dressing-box fell upon my hat. "It's very odd, I thought it was safe. You see, some people go abroad with really so little luggage; but my husband likes to see me *bien mise*, and I am always very careful in consulting his tastes."

"Does he like you to travel?" I said.

"Oh, yes, very much, and always alone—in these days one need not be afraid."

"You never need be," I replied, and tried to go to sleep, but I could not, and I spent my time vainly conjecturing how I could avoid my present companions. At any rate, I would find out where they were going, and at least take a different route. "He of the muddy complexion," as I called him, had just finished my paper. I seized the opportunity and said, "The hotels will be very full in Paris, I am afraid."

"Yes, indeed; but then I know Paris well—an old friend of mine. I know all the hotel-keepers well."

"I should think so," I inwardly said.

"You are going there too? I think I remember

your face." (The brute would have recognised his *bisaïeul* in a swimming-bath.) "I hope we shall meet."

"Yes, indeed." That was settled. I certainly should not go to Paris. The next thing to do was to find out where she of the dressing-case, as I called her, was going, and this I determined to do indirectly.

"I hear that there is a good deal of small-pox at Calais."

"Ah, I'm glad we go to Boulogne—there is only half an hour more sea; and it don't much matter when one's very sick."

I felt keenly for the statesman, and hoped that he was sick for his own sake. The question, however, was settled. I could go to Calais in peace, and, after all, it was not likely that I should have such fellow-travellers again. It just occurred to me that the safest plan to have adopted would have been to go to some quiet hotel in London, near Regent's Park. I should have seen nobody, but then I should not have gone abroad. I think a great deal besides reflecting, and I think that a shy man has no *carrière* south of Regent's Park. Perhaps Tyburnia might support one or two. There don't seem to be many knockers (no shy man could or ever will be able to knock at a door), but then it looks hopelessly dull, and I know one or two extraordinary bores who live there; besides

which, country people come up to the Paddington Hotel.

“Here you are, sir.”

I was at Dover. The sea has a great charm about it—that is to say, regarded from the Lucretian point of view. It is pleasant to see passengers emerge on a stormy day—to see them staggering with difficulty into the station, and turn a deaf ear to the solicitations of the waiters, who would fain have them believe that roast-beef and pale ale will restore them to that equanimity which they have lost; then I amuse myself by reflecting upon the origin of sea-sickness, its powers, its——; but I do not reflect in the same way, nor am I equally amused, as a passenger.

CHAPTER II.

THE STEAMER.

“Your luggage is registered, sir?”

“No, certainly it is not.”

Registered luggage conforms to Mrs Bennet’s definition of entailed property—once registered, you never know what becomes of it again.

“You have a ticket, sir?”

“No, I have not.”

“There’s the steamer,” he said, as if I could have mistaken it for an omnibus, and he (that is,

a porter) proceeded to carry my luggage, dropping very impartially first one package and then another, thinking, I suppose, that, like the fox, the goose, and the grain, they would eat one another if not separated.

If there is anything I dislike, it is getting into a steamer. The steps are so slippery, moving with seaweed, and the boat bumps against the side-beams so disagreeably, and the bridge looks so rickety, and somebody always puts out a very dirty hand and insists upon one's taking hold of it. The first thing I do on getting into a steamer is to ask what kind of a passage we shall have, although I know perfectly well what the answer will be, having as usual been told that it was nice and fresh. (If there is a word I hate, it is fresh; it is, as in drunkenness, a euphemism, and means filthy weather—*un temps de chien*.) I next proceeded to find the most comfortable place on board; and having found it, I had just got into the warmest corner and wrapped myself up with more than ordinary care, when somebody came up to me and said, "Would you mind giving up this place to a lady?" I conceive that the expression of my face must have given him to understand that I did mind. I only groaned, however, and hopped to the side and saw a large woman, with a maid, a nurse, and three children take my place. I dislike particularly giving up my place to anybody.

Under very peculiar circumstances—when, for instance, I see a better one, or if I am tired of it—I sometimes offer it; but to be asked for it when one can make no merit of the sacrifice! “The lady,” however, had one good point—I had never seen her before. What a disagreeable word “lady” is! It is a conspicuous feature of the middle class—a never-failing criterion. The real position of a “lady” is behind the bar at a refreshment-room, and when she marries she always comes into the room on her husband’s arm. These were my reflections, but they were soon disturbed by a violent lurch on the part of the steamer. How tired the sea must be of always moving! I had to move again—they wanted to hang some little boats out just over my seat. These little boats always remind me of the possible use to which they might be put, and I wondered whether, in the event of the boat foundering, I should give up my place again, if by chance I could get one in a little boat, to somebody else. We rolled off at last, and two Frenchmen sat down on my bench and began to talk across me. One had a beard of seven days’ growth, and a black cloth cap with strings, which caused him to look uglier even than nature had made him. The other had a protuberant stomach (it must have been lined with folds of lace, and I felt convinced that he was a smuggler), eyes like a pig’s, and a large gold-headed cane.

"Monsieur voyage un peu?" I shirked answering this, but my right-hand neighbour, who appeared talkative, continued—

"Monsieur souffre apparemment?"

"Oui," I answered.

"Ah! Monsieur est Anglais?"

I could not stand this, so I replied, "Vous êtes connoisseur donc!"

"Est-ce que je m'en douterais?—Monsieur a la prononciation diablement Anglaise—c'est à n'y pas se méprendre."

I do dislike little words—they never mean anything, and always puzzle me. At this moment a seventh wave—I wish there were no seventh waves—caused a general undermining sensation to be felt, and I saw the pig-eyes shut, followed by a groan.

"Monsieur souffre évidemment," I said; "c'est à n'y pas se méprendre;" and thinking that perhaps they might like that bench to themselves, I hopped to another. At the end of this seat was a bundle which contained a human being; as I came near, it uncoiled itself a little and said, "I'm asleep, Harley; go away, that's a good fellow." I recognised the voice; it was Granville's, one of my greatest friends, though what he was doing here I could not conceive. "My dear fellow, I am not Harley; God forbid." We each undid a hand, and gave each other what Alfred de Musset calls "le

brutal shakehand d'un Anglais." My first question was, "What do you mean by 'Harley'? I saw him in London a short time ago."

"Alas! he is here. I never knew him so lively; he has been talking to me for half an hour; and I dare not produce my ticket, for fear of his really finding out where I am going."

"Has he not asked you?"

"Yes, but I told him I was so uncertain that I might take the first boat back again to Dover."

I sympathised cordially, and we discovered that we had left London for the same reason. "Good God, there he is!" cried Granville, and tumbled into his cloak, *et me sub cultrum liquit*.

It was Harley, alas! "Who would have thought of seeing you here?" he began (a valuable precedent for fools!) "Poor Granville's not well, I think."

"No more am I."

"Ah, you are looking well enough."

"No, I am very sick—infernally sick. I never felt so ill in my life."

He would talk; it was no use.

"I really did not like leaving London so soon, and yet half the world is gone. One stayed for Lady Blackwood's ball, but then there was a clearance. I said, however, to Lady B., 'You'll give another, won't you? this is such a good one'—and indeed it was, although there was not quite

enough supper, and another time it might be better to ask fifty less people—and so she is going to give another, a little one ; I think, upon my suggestion, about the ninth. Shall you go to it?"

"No, damn her."

"Ah, you never liked her ; that's just what her husband said of her. You know Sir Lionel?"

"Yes, for a fool."

"Ha, ha ! Is there any news?"

"The only thing I heard was, that somebody had dropped down dead in St James's Street, and, they say, from being bored, the day before yesterday ; perhaps, however, you were there !"

I was getting very savage, while Granville was groaning — my impression is, with suppressed pleasure.

"That's odd ; I was about there most of the day, but I did not see it. Lots of people abroad, and it will be very cheery. The Deathsheds went yesterday, and the Crossbones go to-morrow. I always travel to see my countrymen. Where are you going, by the by?"

"I really don't know !"

"Why, you'd better go with Granville ; he doesn't know either. If I could only meet the Starlings later I think I might——" But here Apollo came to my assistance in the shape of a long coil of rope, which, most unskilfully launched from one sailor to another, embraced, in its career,

Harley's hat, and finally deposited it in the sea, to serve as an object of wonder to Lilliputian fishes. Granville's head reappeared.

"That idiot made one sensible remark. Why should we not go together? At any rate, we shall give less excuse to our 'friends' to interrupt us."

"I shall be delighted," I replied; and so I was. Granville was a man eminently pleasant to travel with; *insouciant*, well-informed, and very good-humoured.

"Me torret face mutuâ Calaïs. Let us stay there to-night and escape these people," I added. Another reason which induced me to assent to Granville's proposition was, that our religious opinions were almost the same. Nothing strikes me so much as the importance of this condition being fulfilled; for if men differ upon this point, there is no object in nature which will not affect them differently!

CHAPTER III.

CALAIS.

"I like Calais, dreary as it is; it is so essentially foreign, and yet so near; besides which it always recalls the "bound of pleasure" with which I saw it for the first time. It is certainly another sense, that of being in another country—I had written

so much of this Chapter, when Grauville came into my room and said—

"What are you writing?"

"A little account of my journey."

"Journey! why, you have hardly left England. Unless you have devoted some pages to the Kentish hop-fields, you can have found nothing to say. Let me see it."

I passively gave it up to him.

"My dear Stuart [by the by, I forgot to say that my name is Stuart], this won't do. Nobody wants to know what sort of position you took up in the railway carriage, and what all your fellow-travellers said."

"Well, but Montaigne tells one he liked white wine, and disliked that and this, and goes into a hundred peculiarities."

"Yes, but you are not Montaigne."

"No, I am not, that's true; but how ought one to write? I have no style."

"Well, anything but essence of egotism; you must change that; and I can't help thinking that you have plagiarised a little, for it seems to me I have seen something very like this before."

This was rather too hard, as originality was the one thing I did pique myself upon. I shut up my writing in despair, and we went from our room into the coffee-room, which, as everybody who has been at Calais knows, is the refreshment-room to the

station. There were a great many people, all under the impression that they must eat a definite number of things in the shortest possible time, looking dirty and uncomfortable; and I was reflecting upon the stupid way in which people generally travel, when I was disturbed by a voice from behind me, "Who would have thought of seeing you?"

Alas, our fate had not enabled us to see Lady Deathshead with her daughters eating *demi-poulets* behind the door. She had seen both Granville and me.

"What are you going to do, Mr Stuart?"

"What are we going to do?" I whispered *sotto voce* to Granville.

"Oh, to see Sterne's room at the Hotel Dessein," he suggested, and I repeated his suggestion. I could not help thinking, however, that in that case it might have been more natural to have gone to the Hotel Dessein.

"Ah, I wish I could go, but we are off by this train. I think I like Clarissa Harlowe the best, but mind you give me an account of it;" and the daughter added, "Remember me to him," as she went away.

"Quite mad!" said Granville; "or did she think we were going to pay a visit to that hopeless ass Sir John Sterne, whom one always takes for a groom out of place?"

"You ought to apologise to the groom. I wonder what Lady Deathshead is doing?"

"How can you wonder at anything she does? Yet I rather like her. I admire her courage at plunging into any subject from literature to cookery, ignorant as she is of all; altogether I should not have anything to say against her, if she was not so fond of having Harley to dinner."

"He is a sort of cross between a linkman and a court-guide."

"Yes," said Granville; "I have often wished to try experiments upon him—to shut him up for a week, and feed him alternate days with a list from the 'Morning Post,' and if he was getting too thin throw in a whole 'Court Journal.'"

"He'd either die from over-eating or starve away at not seeing his own name."

"Well, in either case, we should see no more of him."

"I think Morris, however, a greater bore upon the whole."

"Non ragioniam di lui," said Granville; and we proceeded to explore Calais.

The only unpleasant sensations abroad that I have, arise from a too careful study of the early pages in Murray. I am never tired of reading them. How I must not lose my temper; what sort of boots are the best, and to be always careful in hanging up the key of my room by the *concierge*.

I like reading about the money of the country, its weights and its measures, and the way to hire a servant. I never had a servant in my life abroad, but still it is very useful to know the necessary preliminaries. Still all this information oppresses me when I have an opportunity of putting it into practice, and I find myself continually reflecting upon the little essay concerning the advantage of knowing the language of the country. As it was, I came in sooner than I otherwise should have done, from a conviction that my door had been left open, and that my boot-trees would infallibly lead the staff of waiters into temptation, and I was much surprised to find that they were left untouched. I reflected for a long time whether it would be better French to tell the waiter to put the trees into the boots or the boots upon the trees. The consideration of matters like these to a shy nature like mine is no trifle. (I have spent agonised half-hours perplexing myself whether the cabman would ask for more than 1s. 6d., and in that case whether I should pay him, and suchlike subtleties.) I said, "Garçon, mettez mes bottes sur les formes."

"Ah, oui, monsieur, bien, bien; on vous mettra les formes dans les bottes," was his answer, and I felt crushed and annihilated for several minutes.

My equanimity was restored at last by a *bouillon* to which Granville and I devoted ourselves, and

the servant's triumphant ejaculation of "*Voilà le bouillon des bouillons ; mais, messieurs en seront contents.*" It was a wonder, and I thought how few inns in England could produce so satisfactory a result ; then a salmi, too good for us, "*cui non si convenien si dolci salmi ;*" besides "*lo dolce ber che mai non m'avria sazio.*"

"My dear fellow," said Granville, looking over my shoulder in a most unjustifiable way while I was writing down this remark, "what does anybody care about your boot-trees and bouillon and salmi? you might as well describe the colour of your trousers, and calculate the chances of their wearing through the fortnight."

I felt that it was true—that my simple nature betrayed me occasionally into egotism or egoism (De Tocqueville has defined the difference). I determined to mend my style—that the morrow should see me at least changed in that respect.

I own that it was not without experiencing considerable regret that I resolved to adopt this course, for although I consider talking about myself to be by far the pleasantest thing I know, I think that only second to that is the pleasure of writing about myself. Perhaps one of the most curious points about me, however, is that this characteristic has as its correlative a profound distaste and dislike to hearing other people discuss their own habits and feelings. I am never so

much bored as when my neighbour at dinner (at the St James's) pours into my ear an account of the house he is building, of the run he has had, or the woodcock he has shot, as if it could possibly interest me to know what he has done with his stupid self during the preceding four-and-twenty hours. I never could listen—and I think the dull-est place in the world is, after a church (that is to say, a church during the sermon!), the House of Commons.

With a sigh I rose, walked across the room, opened the window, and *m'appuyai sur les coudes*. It was a bright night, and the shipping stood out against the sky. To a shy disposition like mine, nothing has the same charm that the night has—the freedom from interruption which it brings with it, and the certainty of being able to look forward to at least eight hours spent in annihilation or talking to one's self. (I am not married.) I called out nevertheless, “*Aura veni.*” It did not come, for there was none; and the *fille-de-chambre* was not a second Procris, but she perhaps was asleep. I remained a long time in this position, until at last I thought it would be better to exchange it for a recumbent one. I should not, however, have exchanged it so soon had I not known that, owing to my remonstrances, the feather-bed had been put under the mattress. I hate a feather-bed, and particularly a French feather-bed; one might just as

well jump into a baked batter-pudding. Of course the princess felt the pea through a hundred of them. I put out the light and got into bed. I always feel, under these circumstances, like Bessy, and am much tempted to roll a ball of worsted under the bed. By the by, that is another objection to a feather-bed, that you cannot jump into it from a distance.

CHAPTER IV.

MARIE DE ST CROIX.

Dedicated to L. S—E.

I have always been of opinion that the man who gets up early in the morning has not a sufficient amount of sleep, and I demonstrated the truth of this proposition most painfully in my own case. It was early, that is to say, relatively early, that Granville and I took our places in the train to go to Lille, and we had taken them in diagonal corners, as far as possible from one another, for Granville smokes like a chimney, and I hate smoking as much as I detest its smell. I was congratulating myself—foolish being! for every pleasant thing comes to us unexpectedly—we exhaust in anticipation every expected pleasure, and in whatever shape it comes to us, it falls short of our conceptions—I say I was

congratulating myself that our journey was to be a solitary one—Addison says that the only possible conversation is that of a *tête-à-tête*—when the door opened and a middle-aged man stepped in, followed by his daughter. “Marie,” said he, “sit there,” pointing to the place opposite to me. Marie sat down. Ye heavens! can any position equal that of being *vis-à-vis* to one whose—

Marie was slight, and plainly dressed—*blonde comme les blés*—and her face wore that expression of half-coquettish repose which, to my mind, is the highest attribute of the French nation—

“Bien juger sans beaucoup savoir,
Et bien parler sans le vouloir,
N’être haute ni familière,
N’avoir point d’inegalité.”

I will not quote—I detest quotations—it is, however, the fault of people like Voltaire, who will anticipate me in my best thoughts. Like mice, her feet peeped in and out; but my words can but faintly give any adequate idea of—

“Don’t go to sleep,” cried Granville. My God!—sleep while my senses were boiling over in a wild turmoil of unwonted excitement!

We had not started yet, and a porter was passing by, when Marie beckoned to him—so did I. “A foot-warmer,” we both exclaimed, synchronously, simultaneously, contemporaneously. Marie half laughed, half blushed. I did not dare to do the

former; the latter I effected. Nothing affects me so much as the coincidence of expression in opinions or tastes, however trivial the subject may be. I feel convinced that I should propose on the spot to any woman who admitted that she disliked caviare.

The foot-warmer came, and Marie placed her feet upon it. The situation, however, was one of extreme embarrassment. I had no conception where Marie's feet were. If I came into contact with them, great God! it might have the effect of—inducing her to withdraw her feet. And during these reflections I felt that Marie knew what was passing through my mind—that she knew I was calling her Marie; yet I could not call her by her other name for an obvious reason—I did not know it.

I declare I didn't move my foot. It was quite at the edge, and yet I felt a little furry thing near it. Oh heavens! why did not Providence create me a centipede, that so I might have experienced a hundred such sensations—"doux transports ou s'égarent les pieds."

I took away my foot. Marie, actuated by the same instinct, did the same; and backwards and forwards three separate times we deposited them again together. Alas! that this combination of moral restraint and gratification should have an end.

"Pardon me," I said at last.

"It is my fault," exclaimed Marie.

I know not to what lengths my disclaimer of this solution might have carried me, had not Marie at this juncture got out with her father at St Omer.

"Rather a nice-looking girl," said Granville.

I rushed into the buffet.

"A nice-looking girl!" My impression is that Granville would call Venus a fine-looking woman, and add that she would look well in a charade.

It is a strange thing that none of the solecisms of which I have been a witness during my travels, so often repeated, have had any effect in shaking my prejudices. It is strange, for I have been in countries where the women ate asparagus with their knives and forks, and had never read Miss Austen. I have been at dinners where there were fish-knives, and men with black-lace ties; and I have seen Miss —— drink alternate draughts of brandy with her groom!

CHAPTER V.

THE COUNTRY NEIGHBOUR.

The buffet was excellent. Oh, England! why do you not manage things better? Why am I obliged to blush at my country's failings? Is this

as it should be? How easy 'twere—"Monsieur, navous-vous vu-s que le bonté——" I turned round. It was one of my nearest neighbours in the country—he had on a grey shooting-coat, a grey waistcoat, and grey trousers—an odd leather strap went round him in an odd direction, with a large black case labelled "passport" at the end of it. It was a dark corner, and he did not recognise me. "Disgraziatamente," I began—but that long word had put him to flight. I had no need to continue, and I went back to the carriage.

I had not been a moment there, however, before I felt misgivings as to what I had done. Perhaps the poor man really was in need of some information—perhaps had lost something—had got into some difficulty. I had lost an opportunity, it might be, of conferring a real benefit, without any discomfort to myself. I never feel so charitable as when I have just missed being so. I had behaved like a brute. Then, too, could he believe that an Italian did not know French, and would he not—on second thoughts I settled this question to my satisfaction, on considering my country neighbour's powers of information.

"Did you see a man," said Granville, "in a wild state of excitement, who had lost his child?"

My anxiety was relieved by this, for my country neighbour had had twelve children all born alive.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MUFF.

“Will monsieur have one?”

“Not for the world, Monsieur ——” (“De St Croix” was supplied) “would I deprive you.”

It was a paper containing three briochees. Marie ate one — (what were the sensations of that brioche?). Monsieur de St Croix offered the other two to Granville and me. I own I envied him his feelings. Should I in that position have been willing, not to share, but to give up my all to two strangers whom possibly I should never see again? That possibility I shuddered at. Was I not looking forward to the glance of recognition I hoped to gain from Marie? I declare I understood for the first time Dante’s faintness when Beatrice did not bow to him. I understood the whole possible charm of a *salutazione*.

“How stupid I am!” exclaimed Marie.

Her muff had dropped, and had fallen in a horizontal position. I stooped to pick it up—so did Marie. I put my hand into one side—into the other Marie put hers. *J’effleurai les bouts de ses doigts*. Great heavens! why was I not a centidigit? Marie blushed, and I felt convinced I had the appearance of a piece of red baize. We

both lifted it up together. Thank God, Granville was not looking; his odious realism would have construed my simple action into——

Well, never mind. Milton was sadly wrong when he said that love was judicious, and had its seat in reason. It is totally without judgment very often, and not unfrequently has its seat in a muff. Love was once defined to be—no—it is an improper definition, I think; not that I ever know, however, what is improper and what is not. I am the most unfortunate person in the world, the originator of half the current *bêtises*.¹ I am like Eliza in the 'Plain Dealer,' and cannot see the indecency of "china"—in fact, like Agnes, "*d'une innocence pareille, que je crois que les enfants qu'on fait se font par l'oreille.*"

CHAPTER VII.

THE CAS DE CONSCIENCE.

I was in bed. I had not been in bed long, when I got up to——put my boots, which I had forgotten, outside my door. To what great things do the

¹ I am sometimes asked to recommend some novels, and it always happens that if I lend them they are sent back to me next day, and if they come from the library, the same fate awaits them. It was but the other day I sent 'Gustave,' 'Fanny,' 'Zelie,' and an unobjectionable example of Pigault Lebrun.

most trivial actions lead—how frequently the whole career of a life is changed by a remark!

I had opened the door, and was placing my boots in a position such as I conceived could not escape the attention of the individual whose duty it was to——, when suddenly a waiter rushed past me in great precipitation, crying out, “The fire, monsieur, the fire!” and was gone before I could ejaculate more than “Where? how?”

My first thought was to save Marie. I had seen her go into her room, No. 98, just across the corridor. I rushed across the corridor, and had put my hand upon the door-handle, when it flashed across me that my dress did not quite fulfil all those *convenances* which might be necessary. Gracious heavens! had not Virginie refused to be saved, and had not she jumped into the watery abyss sooner than consent to owe her life to a man, the remembrance of whom would for ever afterwards have shocked her inherent modesty? and in this case I should have less excuse than the sailor, for I could not contemplate the chance of being obliged to swim. Did I not know another case where a husband refused to allow his wife to step into a basket two feet below the edge of the steamer, even when the boat was sinking, for fear of her——; and was not a bystander forced to do injustice to his gentle nature, and whilst he said to the husband, “You be damned,” push his wife over?

Could I, with these recollections fresh in my mind, doubt for an instant that Marie would be acted upon by the same considerations? I hurried back to my room, put on what I conceived to be sufficient, a second time rushed across the corridor and entered Marie's room. She was sitting by the fire reading, in a light-blue dressing-gown, and her hair—— "Mais, monsieur," she not unnaturally exclaimed, "what is it?" I was so bewildered that I declare positively I quite forgot what on earth it was that was the cause of my being there. Marie's bare feet were resting upon the fender—I should add in slippers—*mules si mignonnes*—and I saw about two inches of them. I would willingly have given all I have in possession or in reversion (I am a younger son), to have seen one inch more.

"Mais, monsieur, you are quite pale—tell me then why?"

I recollected myself and said, "You must come away directly, there is a fire—we have not a moment to lose."

Marie snatched up a shawl, and we went to the door. "It won't open," said Marie. It was too true: in my excitement I had closed the door so violently that the china handle had dropped upon the ground and broken sufficiently to prevent its being of any use. It was hopeless. Marie tried, and I tried. What a situation for a shy man! I turned round, and going down upon my knees——

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CAS DE CONSCIENCE.

I looked carefully at the lock. I had hardly completed my investigations when I heard a voice. "Mon Dieu, it is my father," said Marie.

"Mon enfant, come and look at the fire from my window. It is superb, magnificent, well worth looking at."

"That is fortunate," said she; "you can go away quietly now: thanks, notwithstanding, for the intention," and she went out, leaving me *blotti* behind the door.

"Marie," said her father, "you should not leave your door open," and he banged it! I never felt so humiliated in the whole course of my life. I who knew Boccaccio by heart, had studied every "beffa" in Bandello, remembered every situation from Brantôme to Prévost and to Crébillon *films*, kept a prisoner by the want of a——door-handle. What on earth was I to do? There was no tree outside the window to enable me to descend like Maxime Odiot—then, too, it was hard courtyard below—there was no remedy, I must remain quiet. I have always been very unwilling to scrutinise a bedroom at all carefully. Pelham in Madame de Persigny's boudoir perhaps first impressed me with

the notion—and Swift disgusted me completely; here, however, how different: "*toutes les parties de ton habillement éparses présentent à mon imagination celles de toi-même, qu'elles recèlent.*" Here there was nothing—nothing which——

"Bon soir, Marie," and she came back again into the room holding the outer handle in her hand. How I hated that bit of china—I should have liked to jump upon it.

"Mademoiselle," I said, "pardon at least."

"Mais, comment? qu'y a-t'il à pardonner?" I went up to her and——made her a profound bow, and went back to my own room.

Next morning Granville came to my room after breakfast, and I showed him what I had written, hoping that my deference to his opinion would please him. What then was my surprise to hear him say, "Worse and worse; my dear Stuart, this will never do—you have positively stolen the heading for your last chapter."

"But the world does not remember——," I retorted—"witness Lady Deathshead."

"No," said Granville, "but it hates to be told so."

I own I was not the better pleased because I felt that Granville was right, and yet I foresaw that I never should be able to tell my story properly. I really believe that I am the most sentimental person in the world. I am a martyr to associations. There is a particular kind of white petti-

coat which, after the lapse of —— years, makes me *frissonner* whenever I see it. I am always in love. I began when I was only six, and from that time to the present I have always adored somebody. True, I am often disappointed, but still I am grateful that I have not Granville's fossilised heart. He must be the descendant of the man who in the beginning of the last century valued a woman at fourpence in hard cash and two pair of worsted stockings! Great heavens! worsted stockings.

"Remember, too," said Granville, "'que nous avons changé tout cela.' A hundred years ago, perhaps, people might have made love to one another like that; but now it is, 'Je vous adore,' 'moi aussi;' and then, 'Bien, marions nous,' or 'adorons nous,' as the case may be and the circumstances allow. There is not the smallest necessity for these 'delicatesses de cœur.' Maintenant on serre la main, on ne l'effleure point, et va pour les pieds, on les presse sans que ça ne tirât à conséquence." [I have not the smallest conception why Granville would talk in French, for he knows English a great deal better.] "By the by, did you dream this last episode?"

A dream, indeed! I had hardly recovered from the reality.

"You should have said," continued Granville, "it was far from being '*mensonge*' (*mon songe*)."

I groaned: Granville's puns are occasionally

hideous beyond all conception.) "Well, at any rate, if it is true, you will have the pleasure of talking it over."

"I should never think of alluding to such an occurrence."

"Why, that is the only advantage of a *contretemps*—the necessary embarrassment of the conversation afterwards—the feeling that it must be talked about, and yet a determination on each side not to *aborder* the subject—and then, last of all, the second *contretemps* which it produces. Now, I will tell you what happened to me once. I was in a cathedral town, and——"

"Your materialism is dreadful, Granville; I really would rather not hear the story."

"Materialism is an excellent thing, and saves about twenty-five minutes in every half-hour. Why, don't you remember what your favourite poet said?—

'C'est mon avis qu'en somme un bas blanc bien tiré,
Sur une robe blanche un beau ruban moiré,
Et des ongles bien nets, sont le bonheur suprême.
Un point, à ce sujet, m'étonne seulement :
C'est qu'on n'a pas le temps d'y penser quand on aime.'"

I shuddered.

CHAPTER IX.

Dedicated to VISCOUNT P——N.

Saturday, April 13.—Lille is not a very interesting town; its chief associations are Vauban¹ and some very good confectioner's shops, G. and I (G. stands for Granville *bien entendu*) went a long ramble all about, but we did not find much to see. The cathedral is a fineish building, perpendicular(?) style—looks outside like a larded guinea-fowl, and inside it has a very disagreeable smell—I suppose the joint production of human beings and incense. The religion is Roman Catholic, something not very different from ritualism—High Church, &c. &c.

These explorations, at least part of them, were made in a *fiacre*—a remarkably broken-down affair, on a par with the horse; and as we were going through one of the by-streets, off came one of the wheels, and we were deposited on the pavement, which, I should say, was uncommonly hard—about the hardest thing in pavements I ever met with. G. don't often swear, but on this particular occasion he electrified a *fille-de-chambre* and five gamins. It was not "*peste*," it was not "*diable*;" it was a worse word still. I thought we were going to have a row, but we didn't, which was satisfactory. From

¹ Not the horse.

Lille we went on to Namur, as dull a journey as could be taken. The engine was a remarkable one, like an inverted extinguisher, and made a prodigious noise—the country flat as a pancake, except here and there a few rocks jutting out, which appear to be oolite. Granville says they are not. When we got to Namur, we went to see the citadel, which I believe is the only thing thought much of there; and I didn't think much of that. The governor showed us over, and was very civil; he asked me how far it was from London. I hadn't an idea, so I told him 3000 miles! He bowed, and looked as pleased as Punch! By the by, talking of Punch, we saw the most eccentric representation of that worthy in the streets. There was no Judy, and Punch seemed to be delivering an oration about the merits of Belgium in general to the accompaniment of a cracked flute! After we had finished the citadel, there was a church to be seen, so we went after that. There was an altar-piece by Berghem, and a sort of fresco by Both, and an old and very dirty sacristan with about a hundred keys.

After this, having had enough sight-seeing, I went to bathe in the Meuse—(I think that is the name of the river; not that it matters—its water would smell as sweet by any other name!) I had considerable difficulty at first in getting a boat; however, at last I managed it, and was conveyed to an island, on which island I undressed myself.

Having ascertained from my boatman that the water was very deep on the other side, in I jumped, nearly killing myself, and abrading myself terribly. It was about nine inches deep! I was in despair, and to add to it a number of women and small boys congregated on the shore and jeered at me, eventually throwing stones. I did not know what to do—it was no use lying down and trying to burrow a retreat in the bed of the river. On the whole, it was not a satisfactory bathe; and the Meuse don't taste nice.

I didn't see much on my road back to the hotel (I forget its name!), and I was not at all sorry to find myself at the *table-d'hôte*: not that the *table-d'hôte* was good—far from it. We had first soup, then a greasy kind of fish, rather like Mediterranean “loup,” greasy *entrées*, &c., and an uncommonly bad *vin ordinaire*, which I never wish to taste again. And as if the dinner was not a sufficient trial, I was set down next a young Miss with reddish arms and hands, who appeared to be finishing her education previous to appearing at country balls! I remember a Canadian friend of mine at Dieppe who used to bribe the waiter to give him a place next the best-looking individual in the room, which this one wasn't. Granville was worse off. He was opposite to me, next to a governess—a tall gaunt woman, with a long neck. I read somewhere the other day that giraffes got their long

necks from browsing where the trees were uncommonly tall. I wonder whether that governess got hers from browsing (her trees must have been very high), and whether she would transmit the neck or not.

"Jeune mees," said I, "vous connoissez Namur?"

She reddened, dropped a mouthful of chicken, and replied, "Monsieur, je vous remercie, c'est bien la première fois que je me trouve à Namur."

Chère enfant! I recognised the influence of the tall neck opposite.

"Et ça vous interesse."

"Oh, oui, monsieur."

"Change places with me, my dear," said her mother, who was becoming alarmed at the degree of intimacy which appeared to be beginning to exist between us. I believe that I bear unmistakable signs about the face of being a French younger son—that is to say, if there are any. They changed places, and I found myself next to the mother. The mother was a marvellous production—a brown silk dress which creaked like my boots, a long gold chain, and a brooch with a picture of a "relative" in it. It was a wonderful profile. A dog might have been made to bite it easily out of a biscuit. (I wonder whether that dog really did bite Voltaire's face out of biscuits.) She looked me all over, as if I had been a piece of china, with a crack somewhere about me, which would lower my price. At last she said, "You are English?"

"Yes," I said, "I am. I find I am mistaken. I thought you were Parisienne."

"You know Mr Smith?"

"Ah, yes."

"You have heard of him? He is my husband, and was mayor of Birmingham last year."

"Everybody knows the name," I said.

She looked much pleased, and continued, "We come over every year to see after orders. My husband is the greatest manufacturer of manure in the country, and I am sure he would be very happy to take you over the works."

This was an opportunity not to be lost! Unfortunately, however, at that moment I tumbled a glass of *vin ordinaire* over her dress. It had the oddest effect, and I laughed for a quarter of an hour!

The governess had been confiding in G.; and he told me that he had been obliged to tell her that he had a wife and five little children, to stop the confidences.

"At any rate," I said to Granville, as I read this over to him in the evening, "you will allow that I have changed my style."

"There is no doubt about it," he answered; "but it won't do."

"Why not? It is very natural and free."

"Very much so; and if you were in the Rocky Mountains or Himalayas, there could be no objec-

tion to it. The smallest details might interest people. Besides that, it gives a completely wrong notion of your character. This looks as if it was written by somebody who was very energetic and lively, and going to be married; not by a man with a shy and sensitive character like yours."

I began to despair. "I am going into the Ardennes to-morrow," I said. "Will you come?"

"Thanks!" said Granville. "I think I shall stay quiet, and trust to your account for information."

"All right!" said I, as he left the room, which room I proceeded to investigate before going to bed. Fleas don't bite Granville. I can't tell why; for I should certainly bite him if I was a flea. I am a connoisseur in fleas, and can easily tell from a glance the country, previous habits, and course of feeding of a specimen. It would be a great thing if fleas walked. Then one might meet forty of them walking up-stairs, as Professor Tiffin did the bugs. I wonder whether Lord —— has seen a bug yet. If he hasn't seen a flea, I should like him to come to Namur. I never saw a larger one than the one who was kind enough to give me his company that evening. It was a most exciting chase—five times round the room; and I broke my legs perpetually over the things I had knocked over in my excitement. At last I took to throwing my boots at it; but somehow or other I never could manage to hit it. Then I threw my jug of

water at it, but that only brought out an old German next door, who, when he learnt the cause of the disturbance, said to me, "Bah, monsieur! j'en ai vingt mille, et je ne m'en soucie guère." It was all right; for he had *vingt mille et un* when he left my room; and I danced an *Io triumphe* till sleep overtook me!!!

CHAPTER X.

Dedicated to Miss E—E.

I started very early in the morning, and put into my bag two flannel petticoats, three pairs of stockings, and a few other necessaries. I should recommend the traveller who might have any wish to travel in this part of the country to do the same. Flannel is perhaps the best thing that can be worn, especially in case of violent perspiration. I first went up the Meuse in a very small steamer. It was smaller than any I had ever been in, and ran into the bank several times, owing to its inability to cope with the strength of the stream, which is very considerable in parts. The banks of the Meuse are not remarkable as far as Dinan; and I should not advise any one to go up the Meuse, as the mode of travelling is a very slow one.

On arriving at Dinan, I ordered some luncheon,

telling them that I was an Englishman, and was not going to be cheated. I had a very bad luncheon, and was naturally a good deal surprised and annoyed at the following bill:—

	<i>fr.</i>	<i>cts.</i>
Potage,	1	0
Chambre,	1	0
Dîner,	1	0
Service,	1	0
Dégradation du tapis,	0	50

I sent immediately for the landlord, and asked him to explain this. I had had but a demi-portion of soup. I had occupied the room in question for only half-an-hour; and what could be the meaning of the last item? The landlord said I had spilt the vin ordinaire over the carpet. I was quite certain that what he complained of was caused by a large dog which I had seen wandering about. In consequence I refused to pay, and tendered him four francs, protesting that that was an overcharge. I added that I should write to the 'Times' and to the editor of 'Murray,' and that the consequences would probably give him a lesson he would not forget. I ultimately paid 3 francs 75 centimes, and set off for Ciney in a fiacre with one horse. They told me that one horse could not drag it up the hills; but being well accustomed to the impositions practised upon travellers, I insisted upon having only one. I had been previ-

ously all over Dinan, in order to find a donkey to carry me, but apparently there was none. The fiacre was very hard, but by putting one of my flannel petticoats underneath the seat, it became a little more comfortable, although the jolting was somewhat painful. I think they must have put the worst horse they had in the stables into harness, for we could hardly get up the hills. I was at last obliged to get out and walk up the last one; and as I had outstripped the carriage by some distance, I felt somewhat lonely and unprotected on reaching the top of the hill. To add to my fears, a heavily-built peasant appeared, and, coming up to me, would no doubt have attacked me, unless I had had the presence of mind to run my parasol into his face with all my force. This fortunately disconcerted him to such an extent that he ran into a neighbouring wood, and I did not see him again. I should recommend this course to any one under similar circumstances.

I reached Ciney at last, where I had to wait some time for the train. I heard, however, a very interesting account of "our Lady of Ciney," who a short time before had appeared to three boys and four little girls while wandering in the neighbouring woods, and, having warned them against the approach of a wolf, vanished. Having taken my ticket to Jemelles, the station for Rochefort, I got into the train, and, by mistake, into a first-class

carriage, which I had not intended to do. I generally travel second-class, and, if possible, third-class, as fortunately on the Continent no such prejudice exists as in England. On my arrival at Jemelles the conductor at first insisted on my paying the difference, but upon my refusing, finally let the matter alone, relieving his mind apparently by a volley of abuse, which fell harmlessly enough on me, as I am well accustomed to it. I asked how far Rochefort was, and on learning it was only three miles, I set off to walk. The road was very pretty through an avenue of elms, and I did not at all regret my decision, especially as I should have had to pay at least half a franc for the omnibus; and I say it without any shame, to one who is as poor as myself, that sum is quite enough to determine the course to be pursued. Alas, poverty! how great are thy crimes, especially in England, where £2000 a-year seems to be the smallest sum upon which human beings can exist. Rochefort was a bright little village, with the remains of a castle upon a hillock, near the main street; and I was fortunate enough to find a clean-looking inn, whose pretensions seemed, however, humble. Madame Souza was my hostess, and I am glad to be able to publish the name of one who treated me with such civility (and it will not be in vain that I have mentioned her, if the public looks upon my efforts with indulgence).

“Monsieur mangera quelque chose? un poulet, n'est-ce pas——”

“Ah,” said I, “mais je suis pauvre, et ça me coûtera chère.”

“Ah, c'est une bagatelle,” and I heard the last flappings of the chicken in a moment. After I had ordered dinner, I bargained for a guide to go with me to the cavern of Hans-sur-Lesse, which had really attracted me to this part of the country. I soon got one for five sous, and we set off upon our walk. I had not gone far before I saw an interesting specimen of the *convolvulus muddiensis*, and I immediately scrambled after it. Unfortunately, however, I tumbled in trying to cross the stream, and came out very wet and dirty. The guide began to laugh, so I said to him, “Voyez-vous c'est la science—si j'étais riche je m'en fieraux autres; mais vu que je suis au contraire pauvre, que voulez-vous, faut que je fasse moi-même ce que je souhaite.” He did not seem to understand me at all, and he only winked at some other boys who were passing. I cannot help remarking here upon the rudeness of the Belgians. No doubt there are some amongst them who are very different, but still the majority seem to think that respect is to be paid according to the amount of outward respectability. We soon reached the entrance to the cavern of Hans-sur-Lesse, where I had to wait for some time before the requisite number of

people could be got together to form a party. As it was, we had only three peasants with us. I never saw anything so picturesque. The entrance was very narrow—a mere hole in the rock, where the stream had forced its way, reminding me of the end of the 'Inferno' (in fact the whole grotto recalled scene after scene from it to me)—

"Un ruscelletto, che quivi scende
Per la buca d'un sasso, ch'egli ha roso
Col corso ch'egli avvolge."

For some time we wound along its banks, sometimes crossing it by a little bridge, and getting deeper and deeper into the heart of the hill. The different caverns into which we came were called by separate names, generally the result of some peculiar formation in the stalagmites around us. The great drawback was the difficulty of lighting it up at all adequately. In the largest cavern, where the river is finest, a few wisps of straw gave us a momentary impression of its grandeur; but the air was so close by this time, as we had been an hour walking, that my chief object was to get out again. In this cavern there was an array of champagne bottles, and it was with some difficulty that I prevented any from being opened: by, however, stating several times, "Moi je ne paye point," I succeeded. Half an hour's more walking brought us to the exit, which was even more striking than

the entrance. We came to a place where the stream widened into a sort of deep pond, not unlike the inside of the blue grotto at Capri, and here a boat was waiting for us. It was quite dark, with the exception of the flickering torches we held in our hands, and I felt completely in the hands of some Charon, to whom I owed passive obedience. We glided noiselessly along, until at last we emerged into the daylight upon the other side of the hill; and I felt very glad that I had not believed the statement in Bradshaw, and been deterred, consequently, from paying a visit to Hans-sur-Lesse. When we landed, the man who had been with us said to me—

“Cinq francs, monsieur.”

I answered, “Impossible! deux francs;” and I asked my companions how much they were going to pay, as I suspected that it was intended I should pay for all four of us.

“Ah, monsieur, nous sommes pauvres — nous n'avons de quoi.”

“Et moi aussi,” I replied. “Je vais écrire un livre, et si vous ne voulez pas marchander, vous y verrez comment je me vengerai des Belges.”

“Ah, je ne m'en soucie de votre livre; donnez-moi mes cinq francs, et vous pourriez en médire à votre gré.”

I was finally obliged to give him what he asked, as there was nobody to whom I could appeal, so my

only means of redress consists in performing my promise to him. We walked back again to Rochefort, where I found my dinner awaiting my arrival, and Madame Souza's efforts, I must own, had been attended with complete success. I was not overcharged, a circumstance which I feel bound to narrate, having only to pay a franc and a half for my dinner. Afterwards I walked back to Jemelles, catching the afternoon train to Namur, and returned very well satisfied with my day's excursion. I found Granville smoking. He, of course, had been nowhere, and had seen nothing, having even dined apart to escape our *table-d'hôte* friends of the preceding day. He endeavoured, nevertheless, to take some interest in my proceedings, and I read my account to him in the evening, with the view of impressing upon his mind the beauties of the Ardennes. He interrupted me at the beginning, saying, "Why, you are not an old woman; what do you mean by flannel petticoats?" I said I meant flannel shirts. Granville justly remarked that they were not the same thing; but he recommended me to leave it as it was, as I seemed to have metamorphosed myself into a fussy woman for the occasion, and that it was quite in keeping with the rest. I regret to be obliged to add that Granville gave me no opportunity of cavilling at his criticism, for before I had finished I found that he was fast asleep.

This was my fourth failure, which I could only ascribe to the superficial manner in which I had treated my subject, so I resolved that my next attempt, at any rate, should give Granville no cause of complaint in this respect.

CHAPTER XI.

Dedicated to LORD L—E, &c.

On Monday morning we left Namur by the Luxemburg line, and on getting into the railway carriage we found an intelligent middle-aged Frenchman seated there. We had no other fellow-passengers with us. After a short time I said, "Sir," wishing to draw him into conversation, for I have always considered that by that means the justest opinion may be formed about a country, and the greatest amount of truth elicited,—“Sir,” I said, “France is a fine country.” He bowed, and I asked him a good many questions about the internal economy of the country, the state of the roads, the condition of the labouring classes, and the tenure of the greater part of the land about us, and the advantage or otherwise of peasant proprietors.

“On the whole,” he said, “I think that the system of small holdings works well. There is less inequality, more general comfort, and as regards pop-

ulation, we certainly are not so overwhelmed by its increase. I am told that that is not the case in England?"

I said I was afraid that he had not been misinformed.

"I have been told, monsieur, that in your country two people who can hardly make up together an income of 5000 francs, positively marry sometimes, and then think it their duty to increase in a geometrical ratio to their living, and, is it possible? conceive that 'le bon Dieu' will provide for their children."

"Nothing is more common," I was obliged to own.

"Why, look at me," said my friend. "Me voici fifty years old, très content, and unmarried bien entendu. I have my 20,000 livres de rente. I have had nearly as many amours, and no *gêne*."

I congratulated him. He went on.

"Could there be anything more ridiculous than what took place the other day in Paris—an encouragement given to population from the pulpit, as if we had not nearly reached the stage which is our aim? The world can only hold a certain amount of people, and why should I be obliged to pay away part of my 20,000 livres afin que ce Père Hyacinthe s'indulgeat dans ses sottes pensées?"

"Twenty thousand!" said I; but he interrupted me by—

"Certainly; I will tell you their names—Rosalie——"

"No, monsieur, thank you. Vous vous trompez. I was only calculating the English equivalent of 20,000 livres."

"Ah, it is true, I was mistaken. Pardon." How difficult a matter it is to keep a Frenchman's thoughts fixed upon such a subject as political economy! "What," said I, "should you think the proportion of nubile women to be?"

"Peu de chose," he answered.

Desirous, however, as I was of obtaining some correct statistics, I continued, "Could you give any approximate idea of the average number of persons who live on each *étage* in Paris throughout?"

I cannot help thinking that he must have misunderstood me, for he shrugged his shoulders, and said, "Qu'est-ce que ça signifie, monsieur? Coralie était au cinquième, Barberine au rez-de-chaussé, mais vivent les femmes et les pommes de terre!"

I was endeavouring to explain, when he interrupted me again, "You are right—assuredly you are right. Barberine was a *jolie enfant*, but then *en revanche*."

I saw it was of no use endeavouring to obtain statistics from one whose thoughts were in the *coulisses*. At ——, however, he got out of the carriage, and a *sœur de charité* took his place.

There was hardly any subject upon which I desired information so much as upon the present condition of religious establishments in France, their internal economy, and the changes which had affected them during the last few years.

"You are *religieuse*?" I said.

"Plait-il?" was the reply.

I repeated my question, and asked her whether she thought Diderot's book was a fair exponent on the whole of the views and domestic arrangements of the class to which she belonged, or whether its namesake was better calculated to effect that object.

"Plait-il, monsieur?"

I said, "Do you consider that the recent advance of liberal opinions—an advance exemplified as much by the recent publications as by the open expression of fresh ideas—has at all influenced the choice of a profession like yours; or, on the other hand, do you think that the tendency to bigotry among an uneducated people, combined with the impossibility of finding sufficient employment for women, will keep your ranks replenished?"

"Plait-il, monsieur?" she said, at the same time offering me a bundle of bonbons and chocolate which she had extracted from the subterranean recesses of a most capacious pocket.

How difficult it is to arrive at any correct data, and how great an undertaking it must be to write history!

She got out at the next station, and we were some little time alone, until a young Frenchman came in, of about twenty-five. I was much pleased at his arrival; for although I had been a good deal abroad, yet there were several points connected with social matters which to my mind required elucidation.

"Pardon me, monsieur," I said. "How many balls should you think were given during the season at Paris?"

"In Parigi mille e tre," he answered. I was much struck at the oddness of the number, and immediately entered it in my note-book.

"How many marriages are arranged at each?" I added, "and how many per cent turn out happy ones?"

"Ah, monsieur, who knows? But you come from the land of the sport. I love horses. I have one. She is my angel, my all, my adored. She eats out of my hand, she will follow me about. I kiss her every day—such shoulders, such loins, such legs, divine creature! I am coming over to England to buy another, and I go to the Sablonière Hotel."

For twenty-five minutes I could not intercalate a single word, with such pertinacity did he eulogise his horse. What could even Bacon or Gibbon have done in my position? They could not have gleaned anything. Alas! why was I destitute of that charm

which enabled Blank and —— to draw forth such lore from their fellow-companions?

"What a dreadful noise you have been making," said Granville. "Have you found out which is the best hotel at Trèves yet?"

"Hotels, indeed! I have been trying to find out something about the country from its inhabitants. I hate going through the country like Mundungus."

"Well, at any rate, his method is preferable to that of Junior's, boring everybody and getting no reliable information: generally, however, like ——'s friend, they go to sleep in the middle of it. You might just as well ask the first person you met in an omnibus in the Strand what were the chances of our going to war with Spain, and then detail his remarks upon the subject. If you must write something, why not give the number of tunnels between here and Luxemburg, the length of each, &c., and then the world would say you had travelled to some purpose."

"Well, but I really do not know what to do; all my ideas are gone."

"To Madame Aubray?" said Granville. "Stop, I have one, however: suppose I write a chapter for you."

I expressed my delight, and Granville in a minute or two presented me with the following:—

CHAPTER —.

On the Railway from Trèves to Coblenz.

There is no railroad from Trèves to Coblenz.

I turned away in disgust, denouncing plagiarism and parodies, while my impression is Granville said something very like “Ceux de qui la conduite offre le plus à rire, sont toujours sur autrui les premiers à médire. There was one good point, however, about Tartuffe, he was able to catch a flea,” he added.

I with great difficulty restrained myself after this from asking any more questions, for at Conz two very intelligent men came in, from whom, in Granville's absence, I think I could have extracted a great deal. I always have felt grateful to those travellers who never passed a peasant without endeavouring to ascertain from him the condition of the cereals that year, and whose conversation with the children of the country enabled them to determine what class of government suited the inhabitants best, and what was the form of dissent that prevailed to the greatest extent; and I had always hoped to be able to give the result of my own experience on the subject. My reflections were cut short by the arrival of the train at Trèves, where I hoped to find a great field open to my researches, as Granville told me that, out of the three people

in England who appeared to be aware of its existence, two thought that it was in the north of Italy, and the third that it was somewhere in the Pyrenees.

CHAPTER XII.

I have always considered that the most ill-bred act of which a man can be guilty is to die in his friend's house; but after this I think that falling ill when one has a *compagnon de voyage* may fairly be entitled to the second place. This latter offence was mine, and I was very much ashamed of myself on being obliged to inaugurate my visit to Trèves by immediately sending for the doctor. A little round-faced German, Dr Rausch, made his appearance directly, when the following dialogue took place. Poor man, he stammered so dreadfully that I was obliged to originate everything.

"Je ne me porte pas bien, monsieur," I began.

"Ah!" said he, "v-v-ous—ne—v-ous—p-portez pas b-bien, monsieur," as if he had made a great discovery.

I could hardly help quoting Molière, and adding, "Quand je ne me porte pas bien, je suis malade; et quand je suis malade, je ne me porte pas bien." At last, however, he ejaculated convulsively—

"Vous êtes ordinairement gai, monsieur."

"Surtout quand je ne souffre point."

This reply of mine evidently had some effect upon the course of treatment to be adopted. For about ten minutes he repeated everything I said, transposing the tense, and ended by a wonderful piece of generalisation, "Oui, m-monsieur, vous avez l-l-l-l-a f-fièvre; qu-quand on a froid d-dans [nothing can give the smallest conception of the difficulty he experienced in pronouncing the word *dans*] une chambre aussi chaude que ceci on a la fièvre!"

After having written some hieroglyphics he went away, and in ten minutes the door opened and the garçon entered announcing Dr Rausch, and a middle-aged man, totally different from the "Jacob" who had preceded him, came in; and Granville, who ought to have helped me in this most unforeseen contingency, rushed into a corner and began to read a book upside down with remarkable attention.

"Bon jour, monsieur; mais malheureusement nous venons de voir le Docteur Rausch."

"Pardon, monsieur—je suis le Docteur Rausch."

I did so wish for Molière, he would have made such a charming farce out of "*Le médecin imprévu*." The situation was an awkward one, and I felt that the object of this second would probably be to neutralise all the prescriptions of the one who had robbed him of his birthright. I determined, however, that his anger and the "*spretæ injuria formæ*" should fall upon his predecessor; so with a view to

identifying him I exclaimed, "C'était un jeune homme qui bégayait terriblement—affreusement."

"Ah! tiens—c'est mon fils." The mystery was solved, and the elder Sangrado was delighted to leave me in the hands of the younger, although I must do him the justice to say that he made me drink Bordeaux, and did not suggest for a moment the other part of the remedy.

If, as I have said, to be ill abroad is an unpardonable sin, at any rate it has the merit of carrying its own punishment with it. A very small room, with a very dirty floor and one big cold window which opened upon the most deserted of leads, was very *triste*; besides which, all the rain in Trèves seemed to concentrate itself and splash about outside. Granville came in occasionally, like the dove in the Ark, to say that there was nothing to be seen but water, and that the fishes were leaving their aquariums for the streets (this I saw afterwards in a French paper—I can't help thinking that it is more likely that Granville found the joke there than that he sent it to the paper); but, with the exception of this excitement, I had nothing to do but contemplate a hideous stove with great arms which glared at me from the other side of the room.

My only excitement was speculating how long it would take my doctor to utter any given word: he came every morning to tell me it was quite im-

possible to go out, and that they had never known such a winter before in that part of the country. This, however, is universal. When I was in Rome I remember being told that it had not been so cold for forty years, and the fact that Pss—i's coachman had been frozen to death on the box while waiting at the opera for his mistress was adduced as a proof: on inquiries afterwards, I must own that it was satisfactorily shown that the coachman's inability to stir proceeded mainly from drunkenness. "Writing as usual," said Granville, as he came in to inveigh against the weather (I only wished that the weather was affected by bad language). "Is it a topographical account of Trèves and the surrounding country?—you have such good opportunities of judging of them: even if you were able to go out, the result would probably resemble Murray as much as a schoolboy's translation of the Greek Testament does the Bible. Why not imitate Bædeker's style? which is a cross between Pindar and Bradshaw." (I don't believe Granville ever read more Pindar than *Pindarum quisquis studet æmulari*; but he evidently had a notion that his style was sometimes a little confused.)

"To tell the truth, I am beginning to agree with you in thinking that nobody wishes for information."

"In that case you will be well by to-morrow."

Granville's prophecy turned out correct, and I

began sight-seeing at Trèves in the pouring rain, which does not improve Roman remains by any means. I was not at all disappointed, however, for I had rather imagined that I was going to see something on the scale of Wroxeter. When I went to Wroxeter, I had just come back from Pompeii, and I certainly was not impressed by the collection of small holes filled with the *débris* of sandwich papers, the refuse of past picnics. But here in Trèves there was no difficulty in recognising the Roman monuments. The amphitheatre was not so large as at Verona; the baths were, it is true, inferior to Caracalla's; but the fact that they were preserved at all so far north was quite sufficient to interest one in them. Besides which, the Porta Nigra was as fine, if not finer, than anything of its kind which I had seen in Italy, and justified the use of all the epithets which Baedeker lavished upon it.

Granville, who had seen quite as much as he wanted, went down the Moselle to Coblenz, and came back next day with a glowing account of the beauties of its banks. As the steamer started at half-past five in the morning, it is absolutely impossible that he should have spent the day otherwise than in sleeping—a view on my part which is confirmed by the extraordinary manner in which his account tallied with the descriptions I read in the guide-books. I in vain endeavoured to find

out some new interests in the town, but there were no shops, no pretty people, and no possible opportunity for an adventure. I found some lines in my rambles over the porch of a palace near the cathedral to this effect—

“Insignes isti qui me peperêre parentes,
Sunt canis atque draco—vivat uterque parens.”

They only struck me because I felt that it was just the sort of inscription which Lady Mary W. Montagu would have made a note of, and sent to Pope, telling him to make them out, and exhaust his love in a good translation.

I was not at all sorry when we settled on Thursday evening that we would leave Trèves the next day, for I knew the face of every photograph in our salon, the number of steps up to my bedroom, and the flavour of every drug in the *apothéke* opposite. The hotel, too, was undergoing its periodical repairs, and certainly it required painting again to merit its epithet of “Rothés,” its colour being that of faded blotting-paper.

CHAPTER XIII.

On Friday morning Granville and I left Trèves, and stopped at Luxemburg on our way north, with the intention of being able to lay down the law

upon all possible points connected with the question on our return to London. I am afraid, however, that what we discovered principally was that we were totally unable to understand the dialect of the country, and that the Prussian soldiers were extremely averse from allowing us to inspect their needle-guns, and intimated that we had much better leave them alone. The whole interest of Luxemburg consists in its strategical position, and with the exception of the Stadt-Haus, which was a charming old house with the quaintest panels carved on its façade, there was nothing worth seeing. We drove round the town and over it, and felt that in the space of three hours we were fully masters of the situation, and quite capable of answering any conceivable question that might be put to us touching the population or the wishes of the inhabitants. This last point had been settled to my complete satisfaction by our cab-driver, though it is true that Granville and I differed strongly afterwards as to the bent of his inclinations.

At Luxemburg we took tickets for Trois Fontaines, where Granville said there was a formation he wished to see, and a few ruined castles, which influenced me more ; so we determined to stop there the night. The railroad, Granville found out, had been opened hardly six weeks ; and this fact he steadily repeated to me whenever we stopped ab-

ruptly with no apparent cause, and whenever the incline was so steep as to give one the impression that the engine had become utterly unmanageable, and that we were run away with. The country was lovely—prettier far than anything I had seen before in Belgium. We followed the windings of a clear stream, with occasional tunnels through rocks, upon whose heights were perched fantastic ruins, utterly unknown to English travellers. Granville said the rocks were all vertical, and that there had evidently been a great convulsion of nature there. I looked at them, and said that I quite agreed with him. He went on, “The rocks look very schistose about here.” I said I thought they were infernally so—in fact, that I had never seen anything look more so. He said there was a good deal of mica. I felt sure of it, and he looked much pleased. On our arrival at Trois Fontaines, I was rather surprised to see no signs of any village; and when the train had gone on, leaving our luggage and ourselves alone on the platform, I thought Granville looked a little astonished, as he had given me a charming description of the beauties of this village. We made inquiries, and were told that we had made a slight mistake—the station at which we were was merely for the arrangements of the line, the place at which we had intended to stop was fifteen miles further on. No, there was no inn; there was nothing anywhere. I rushed into the middle of the road,

frantically, and asked Granville whether the formation was good to eat in these parts, but he did not seem in the least amused. "At any rate," I said, "we are on classic ground—this is the beginning of the Ardennes."

"Yes," answered Granville; "now I am in Arden, the more fool I; when I was at home I was in a better place; but travellers must be content."

"Mais, monsieur, si je ne me trompe pas," said a pleasant voice near us, "surely I see my late *compagnons de voyage*."

We looked round, and saw Monsieur de St Croix, and after we had recognised one another we tried to get some information as to the possibility of finding a place to stay at. He told us that there was not even a cabaret within distance; but, on the other hand, he said he trusted we should not hesitate to come to his château, which was close by, and where both his daughter and himself would be charmed to see us. We naturally were delighted to accept his invitation, and in a few minutes he drove us away from the inhospitable station of Trois Fontaines. We went a little way up the main valley, and then turning away up the course of a tributary stream we soon came in sight of our host's house. "Voilà le château de Roqueville. We are a little uncivilised, I am afraid, but we shall do our possible for you."

"Much better," I whispered to Granville, "than sleeping in a formation."

This was, curiously enough, another joke which he did not seem to appreciate. I cannot trust myself to describe the château. Balzac had already done so. "C'était un de ces petits châteaux, blancs, jolis, à tourelles sculptées, brodés comme une dentelle de malines, un de ces châteaux mignons, pimpants qui se mirent dans les eaux avec leurs bouquets de mûriers, leurs vignes, leurs chemins creux, leurs longues balustrades à jour, leurs caves en rochers, leurs manteaux de lierre, leurs escarpements." There was every accessory—rock, wood, and water; and by no means least in importance, Marie came outside to meet her father at the top of the terrace-stairs as we arrived. A half-suppressed "Mon Dieu" greeted us; and then, with a smile, she put out her hand, as much as to say that she was glad to see us, whatever wind had been the means of blowing us there. If there is anything I dislike, it is a woman who keeps one in a state of uncertainty as to whether she is going to shake hands with you or not—half-bowing, half-advancing, and always a picture of *mauvaise honte*; it is as disagreeable as not being able to pass a woman—for Sterne's good fortune does not occur to everybody. Dinner was to take place directly, and we were led to our rooms across the courtyard which formed the interior of the château. One side alone was open, and looked down the valley of the Sauer, which seemed far more lovely now that our dinner was no longer prob-

lematical. Granville was in a charming state of mind, partly owing, I think, to some insinuations he had been base enough to give vent to at Namur concerning M. de St Croix; and I am inclined to believe that if I had said our chimneypieces were limestone, he would have meekly assented. The reception-rooms were on the ground-floor, opening into one another, and far more comfortable than those I had generally seen abroad. It was evidently an old house, and the bits of *boiserie* and the tapestry and the quaint *magots* which I saw on all sides of me made me fall in love still more with my quarters.

Our host was very pleasant, and I found out that he lived here alone with his daughter, his wife having been dead some years. Marie had only just come out, and to my great delight he told us that he was going to inaugurate her *début* by paying a visit to London this year. We did not sit for ever barbarously in the dining-room, but adjourned to a pretty boudoir overlooking the valley, and which I think must have been Marie's sanctum.

Marie was naturally very eager to know something about London, and she began by saying to us, "Tell me what you do a little, or rather, to begin with, tell me what I shall do—how shall I spend the day?"

"Granville answered her, "You will ride in the morning, drive in the afternoon, yawn a good deal,

read a very little, drink a great deal of tea, eat a very bad dinner, go to a party in the evening, and then to a ball, where you will fall a little in love."

"Ah! ce sera bien la première fois que je me suis amourachée (why do you look shocked, Mr Stuart?) but your account sounds a little *triste*."

Granville was evidently going to agree cordially, and say something very disagreeable, when I interrupted him and said, "Oh, no, it is charming; and amongst society's most eager votaries is Mr Granville."

"Well, let us begin at the beginning; do you ride?"

"I did," said Granville; "but I find that people have so little to say when I meet them once in the day, that I think it is better to give up the chance of seeing them in the morning, so as to get the concentrated force of their intellect in the evening."

"Oh, I am not afraid of not having enough to talk about except at dinner. I am told they are very long—*n'est-ce pas?*"

"Poor thing," whispered Granville, "would it not be better to disabuse her mind from any notion that she will suffer from them? I can fancy her coming in the evening at a quarter past ten—the women just come up-stairs, and Mrs —— glaring at her as if she was a wild beast."

Marie went on, "Not that I care at all about dinners."

"Women never do," Granville said; "and that is the reason why they always order such bad ones."

"Quel mauvais compliment!"

"Here at least we are *dépaysés* in that respect."

"But your parties—they must be pleasant?"

"They are the bore's paradise," Granville replied, "the interregnum between a dinner and a ball—for there they can always tell you where they have been dining and where they are going next."

"Est-ce qu'on fait la cour?"

"Far from it, mademoiselle—the usual subject of conversation for the majority of men is an apology for being seen there at all. Stuart once went so far as to tell his hostess that circumstances over which he had no control had obliged him to come to her, but that a similar occurrence should never take place again. If it is a political party nobody knows his neighbour, and you might present two Polar bears and a chimpanzee with perfect safety to your hostess, and she would only ask them to go into the next room, telling them, at the same time, that it was very good of them to come, and that her husband would be delighted to talk to them. Then there are parties to which people ask their friends."

"Mais cela doit être amusant."

"So it would be if their friends wanted to see them; but they generally look as if they had come

under protest, and as if they were conscious that a ball was going to be given to which they would not be asked. Besides, the world is in a great hurry; they have not the time to finish their sentences, and when they do they are *tant soit peu* idiotic."

"And after that," said Marie, "I am to go to a ball; tell me about them."

"I am afraid they are much too like all others to deserve description—generally two small rooms, like a grand pianoforte cut in half; a narrow staircase, draped discreetly in pink gauze; a dirty little conservatory which will hold four people; six maid-servants, looking after what appears to be the *débris* of a pawnbroker's shop; a dining-room, trying with the aid of pillars to sustain the weight of the drawing-room, and containing the supper."

"*N'importe* the supper—the people?"

"That depends upon the house a good deal. Perhaps the chaperons differ less than any other particular class. You will see them sitting on high narrow benches all round the room, like the senators in the Capitol, and one longs to pull their beards to wake them."

"What do they do?"

"Watch and pray, and inhale dust. They sit with impassive countenances until the morning comes and makes them more ghastly than ever in the light."

"Quel triste métier !"

"Then there are the daughters of the chaperons—some there because they can't help it, others because they like dancing."

"Very natural," said Marie. "You are not talking about the bourgeoisie now, are you?"

"Far from it. They are to be distinguished very easily, as in Rousseau's time, by high gowns, amongst other peculiarities. The others 'ont vu qu'une gorge découverte est en scandale au public, ainsi elles ont largement échancré leur corps.'"

"My dear Granville," I exclaimed, shocked at his plain-speaking, "don't quote 'La Nouvelle Héloïse.'"

"Oh, I have read it," said Marie, "so you need not mind. But who will dance with me?"

"Everybody," I said, while Granville went on—

"Two or three *attachés* and a clerk from the War Office."

"Won't that be rather ennuyeux?"

"Not a bit; they valse much better than other people, because they spend more time about it. Besides, English girls, as a rule——"

"Are they clever?" Marie broke in.

"Yes, I think they are, with the exception of those who have a reputation for being so. When you inquire on what grounds Miss 'Chose' is to be considered a *bel esprit*, you find out that the day

before yesterday she knew where the Antilles were after looking for them in the map, that she has drawn a horse which was not mistaken by her best friend for a cow, that she has refused the stupidest man in London once, and that she is certainly cleverer than her other two sisters."

"What a pretty picture! But where shall I see your *savants*? Hardly at a ball, I suppose?"

"Certainly not. Literary society is quite *à part*. That will amuse you, however. Literary wives look as if they had been modelled by their husbands (totally ignorant of sculpture *bien entendu*) and dressed by them afterwards—as angular as the corner of a *commode*, and just as likely to tear people's dresses."

"What do they do?"

"They talk about what they don't understand, or else rush into the opposite extreme——"

"And their husbands?"

"In the evening they look as uncomfortable in their clothes as a German baby, and because they can't put their feet upon the chimneypiece and smoke, inveigh against the artificial hollowness of London society. However, you will be able to judge better for yourself in a few weeks. Stuart would give you a very different account."

"What have you been writing?" said Marie, turning to me, and taking the paper on which I had been scribbling out of my hands.

"Ne pas avoir aimé !" que je vous plains, Marie,
C'est écrire en sable que de vivre sans amour,
Etre le hochet d'un instant, le caprice d'un jour—
Voir passer les plaisirs, et s'en jouir autrui.

"Ne pas avoir aimé !" Le bonheur s'enfuit,
Tandis que vous soutenez le contre et le pour,
Vous posez en philosophe, et dites tour à tour,
"L'amour est un rêve, l'on s'en moque aujourd'hui."

"Ne pas avoir aimé !" O chagrin suprême !
Toute chose-ici bas aime, et se trouve aimée ;
C'est la loi de l'espèce, de l'univers, de Dieu même :

Notre avenir, notre passé. Mais mon cœur s'est apaisé,
Car dans ce moment ou tu dis, mon adorée,
Que vous n'aviez aimé, tu m'as dit, "Je t'aime."

"I hope my namesake has a chaperon," said Marie, when she had read it, "for I think she wants one very badly. There are several mistakes in it too."

"Will you correct them?" I said.

"Volontiers."

"And give it back to me at the first ball at which we meet, if you are not *désillusionnée* by Granville's account? The fact is, he goes out, sees a dirty gown, and then says, 'All the women had dirty gowns.' Somebody makes an idiotic remark, and he says, 'All the people were idiots.' His only object is to find fault with something."

"And I generally succeed."

"Of course, if you look you will sometimes see dirty gowns, and if you talk to a good many people

you will find that they repeat themselves before second childhood comes on."

"It is very hard to suffer unjustly, for really I am the most good-natured man in the world, only nobody but myself has made the discovery. By the by, I have a better ending for your sonnet—after *passé* read—

‘ Mais mon cœur s’est consolé,
Et je respire librement en me voyant sauvé,
Car sans ta sottise franchise j’allais crier, “ Je t’aime.” ’

You may have my emendation as a present."

Marie laughed, while I scouted the proposition.

"Mes vers sont vers de jeune homme et non un catéchisme——"

We were fortunately preserved from the rest of the quotation by our host challenging us to a game of billiards, and our conversation was put an end to for the evening.

"She is a nice little girl," said Granville, when we had gone up-stairs; "but don't commit the absurdity of falling in love with her."

Is there anything like the brutal frankness of a friend? and yet I ought not to complain; for I well remember a college contemporary of mine to whom in similar circumstances I gave the soundest and most practical advice, telling him to go abroad that very evening and to forget the silly individual in question, to which silly individual he proposed the next day, and was married in less than two

months! As it was, I did not answer him, and went to bed thinking of Porphyro, and wishing for another opportunity of "gazing upon her empty dress."

CHAPTER XIV.

When Monsieur de St Croix asked us next morning to stay till Saturday, I own I felt inclined to differ considerably with Granville, when he said "that unfortunately we were obliged to go to Liège, and that we must be back again in England directly." This was a contradiction, and I did not understand in the least what he meant by excusing himself afterwards on the ground that it was for my good.

On the contrary, a prolonged stay of a week at Roqueville would have been of infinite service to me. As it was, we went away directly after breakfast, and Marie's last *au revoir* was all I had to comfort me. It is extraordinary how much may be discovered in even two words—the most unintelligible Greek chorus does not afford more food for meditation. Our host drove us back to the station, and was so pleasant, and invited us so genially to come back again in the summer, that Granville positively thanked him for his hospitality with a greater degree of warmth than I had ever seen him display before.

The country was lovely from Trois Fontaines to Spa, and the only drawback was the odd behaviour of the train, which had evidently not been accustomed to go through tunnels or down-hill, and enabled Granville to describe all the possible accidents to which new lines are liable. I had been to Spa before, when, however, the world was there, and I did not know how much a watering-place depended upon summer. There was no *fiacre* at the station, and we walked to our hotel through deserted streets. The only thing that was going on was painting—the shops, the hotels, all was redolent of paint. When we got to the hotel we were stared at.

“Two swallows,” said Granville, “do not make a summer.”

Yes, we could sleep, but there was no dinner, and we wandered about the town in vain trying to find one. Every place gave us the same answer, and at last I exclaimed, with an air of gravity, “Neanmoins on dine à Spa?”

The answer was given doubtingly in the affirmative, as much as to say that once in a month such an event might take place. At last we found an inn, and having asked for food, much as Orlando did in ‘As you like it,’ we frightened the landlord into promising us something to eat.

“Vous mangez les rats, m’sieur?”

I turned round in blank horror to Granville, who said, “Certainly we did.”

On expostulating, I found that he had said "gras," and I cordially agreed. I was very grateful to that inn, and would have quoted Shenstone, only I felt certain Granville would not recognise it.

I should have enjoyed my dinner still more could I have prevented Granville from giving me the information he had acquired from reading a book on the 'Physiology of the Stomach,' for his remarks had the same effect on me as those of Nasidienus upon his guests.

We left Spa next morning, not being at all desirous to see how long human nature can exist without food, or inclined to agree with Shelley in thinking it an unnecessary luxury. Granville wanted to go to Liège to see the bone-caves; and the moment we arrived there, we rushed all over the town with the intention of getting information.

"What!" said Granville, to one meek-looking bookseller. "Have you never heard of the famous discoveries recently made of *ossements fossiles*?"

No, he had not; and as far as I could learn, his ignorance was very generally shared.

At last we went to the Museum in despair, and I was much shocked by Granville's asking whether "La Musée" was open. On my objecting to his use of the feminine gender, he had the audacity to say that *musée* was a word which ought to be feminine, and that, therefore, he always made it so. He also had the baseness to assert, that I had asked

for “la collection de géologique,” an accusation which was totally unfounded. I mention this because it was the only real altercation that took place between us during our travels, and which nearly led to a contest as serious as that which arose upon the discussion as to which was the right end to break eggs upon. I believe we were the first persons who had ever expressed a wish to see that part of the Museum. An old man showed us the collection; and on Granville saying, “Vous êtes connoisseur donc?” replied, “Non, monsieur, je suis concierge.” Part of the collection, and a good many fossils from coal deposits, were arranged in fair enough order; but what we had come to see—namely, the result of the most recent excavations—was not classified, and quite at the top of the building. We spent some time there, and while I was examining attentively a fine brain of a castor, I was very much astonished to see an extraordinary animal coming towards me from the lower part of the cabinet. It bowed very civilly, and said, “I am glad to see you; it is just 100 million years since I have seen anybody.”

I stared in amazement, and remarked, “Why, the world has only been made a few thousand years.”

“Stuff and nonsense!” said my friend. “Who told you that rubbish?”

I was on the point of answering, “My mother,” but as he could not possibly have read Wordsworth,

I did not answer his question, and only asked him his name.

"I am the Rhamphorynchus."

"Bless me! what a curious name. Is it a Christian or surname? Why did Adam give you such a long one, pray?"

"Adam—who was he? I never heard of him."

"An historical character," I answered off-hand.

"But perhaps you have heard of Noah?"

"Was he a Batrachian?"

I said I thought not.

"Ah, recent period."

"Precisely," I remarked, for I felt quite overawed by the superior knowledge he brought to bear upon the subject.

"I beg your pardon, but why do you not go about in these days? or is coal the only thing that suits you?"

"Coal—fiddlesticks—what is that? I was coming home late from a party one night, and I tumbled into a ditch and could not get out—that's all."

"Were the parties pleasant then?" I asked, timidly.

"Yes, all but the political ones; the Cephalaspis gave most of those, and they were very dull."

"How is it," I said, "that you became extinct?"

"You see there were nothing but female Rhamphorynchuses and Cephalaspides born after a certain time, and they got so tired of one another that

they soon died away." The fear seized my mind lest a similar catastrophe should ever happen in London.

"Don't go to sleep," said Granville, shaking me by the arm.

"Asleep," I said, "there he is—look quickly, you can just see his tail," for upon Granville's arrival my friend scuttled off. "He told me he was the *Rhamphorynchus*, and that when he was coming back from a party"—it was no use. I saw from Granville's face he did not believe me, and that he would not, until he got a card with "*Lady Cephalaspis at home*" upon it.

"Besides," said he, "it does not belong to the coal formations at all."

"Surely he ought to know more about himself than you." Granville, however, would not allow such a possibility, and remained incredulous. The collection was certainly a very interesting one, and we stayed some time looking over the bones of the cave inhabitants, which were very complete—more so, I thought, than those in the British Museum. Down-stairs we saw in the Professor's laboratory (who unfortunately for us was not in) the skull of the Engis man. It had been plastered together like a broken teacup, and I was totally unable to form any conception of the capabilities of the being to whom it had belonged. Having found out that the only cave where discoveries

were still made was that of Engihoul, we started off there immediately, but our expedition consisted in our having to wait three hours at Engis in pelting rain ; for the only knowledge of *ossements fossiles* that the inhabitants had, led them to direct us to a cemetery three miles off, and the cavern consequently remained unexplored ; and unfortunately there was no château of Roqueville near to compensate us for the loss of a formation, so we went on to Brussels as fast as we could. Granville had never seen the "Musée Wiertz," so I insisted on his stopping to see the pictures : the deceptions are clever *tours de force*, but I think the most striking picture is the "Scene in Hell," where Napoleon is standing in the midst of flames, while numbers of women are presenting to him the *disjecta membra* of their husbands and sons. A memoir of Antoine Wiertz has just been published, written in an execrable style, but containing some interesting correspondence. Granville intends to review it, so I shall not say more about it.

CHAPTER XV.

Dedicated to H—H D—N.

As I had one or two doubts still left in my mind about the exact position occupied by the Allied Armies previous to the battle of Waterloo, I thought

it would be better to determine them by going over to the field of action, so Granville and I devoted the greater part of the next day to studying the country. We had seen all we wished to see, and as the day was very fine we set off to walk back to Brussels, and dismissed our guide. We had hardly reached the eastern extremity of the forest of Soignies, when we were met by a man in a state of complete nudity. He appeared to be about forty years of age; his skin had attained a somewhat darkish colour from exposure to the sun; his face was carefully shaven, and his whole appearance bore evidence to the fact that he was a deeply-thinking and cultivated man. We were endeavouring to make way for him, when he stopped abruptly, and said, "Welcome; it is long since I have seen such as you. It is no ordinary surprise to me to behold those whose habitual resort is the world." Granville was evidently going to say that the surprise was reciprocal, but I stopped him, for I had always entertained the belief that heaven and earth contained more things than were dreamt of in our philosophy. Certainly, occasions such as these did not present themselves every day to me, but I ascribed it only to my own ignorance and want of research, for I well remember a dear friend of mine giving me a most interesting description of a dinner-party in one of the most fashionable quarters in London—viz., — Square (I promised him

that I would not mention the name of the hostess). He told me that although he had arrived very late—in fact about half-past six—they were still waiting for the arrival of two guests, who came in shortly afterwards—a gentleman and lady. He was simply attired in a white tie, she in a pair of black gloves. He added that he was the only person in the room who expressed any surprise at their entrance in that dress, such progress had these doctrines made in the neighbourhood of the Square. He took the lady in to dinner, and found her pleasant and well-informed, possessing an infinite fund of humour, tempered at the same time by a slight degree of *naïveté*. She told him that she thought it extremely probable that this fresh impulse to civilisation would embrace in its movement the greater part of good society. So I only said, hesitatingly, "You are a native of these parts?"

"Yes," he answered; "for many years we have abandoned the haunts of idleness. To-day we are celebrating our eightieth anniversary; to-day we revere the founder of our community."

"And that community is——"

"The embodiment of nature; the type of the great; a society founded upon abstract ideas of what is Cosmos by the great Pangymnos in the year 1787."

"Then your existence dates back eighty years?"

"Precisely so."

"Were you not at all disturbed by the battle here in '15?" asked Granville.

"What battle?"

He evidently had not been disturbed! He went on—

"The society is distinguished by a few trivial external peculiarities" (Granville kicked me—whether he meant it as a mark of dissent I do not know), "but its inner life is what really separates it from the rest of the world. Pangymnos, our founder, who died twenty years ago, bequeathed his name, to be taken by each president in succession."

"And you inherited this legacy?"

"Yes; for twenty years the interests of our community have been in my hands."

"One of the outward marks," said Granville, "to which you alluded is the absence of—dress."

"You are right—it is. Pangymnos saw that without the beautiful nothing was true; that in the lines of the beautiful consisted real force," here he pointed to the outline of his legs. "Pangymnos saw that dress was a negation of this state; he determined therefore to discard it, typical, as it was too, of the fall of the human race; and, flying to this place, he promulgated his tenets, the result of which was that many noble spirits followed his example, disgusted by the common conven-

tionalities which hamper men in their present artificial state."

I was deriving so much pleasure from the information I received, that I was not at all sorry that two questions of Granville's should pass unheeded—the one, whether Pangynnos had ever written art-critiques for any of the daily newspapers; the other inquiring what effect, if any, the tailor's strike had had upon the movement.

After a moment's pause, our new acquaintance continued—

"But come and judge for yourselves; our dwellings are close by. You will see our mode of living, our institutions, and polity."

We accepted his invitation with the greatest pleasure, and I could not help thinking how ignorant the majority of the world is about what is passing at their very doors. Narrow-mindedness and intolerance combine in refusing to see what is actually before their eyes; and it is not until the last moment that the existence of rivals is acknowledged! Now, by mere accident, what an opportunity was to be given us! Visions of beauty rushed across my sight. I recalled to my mind the description given by Lady Mary Wortley in her letter to Lady Rich of a scene parallel to the one I was anticipating. I should repeat over and over again, "Guzél péc Guzél, which is nothing more than charming, very charming." Lady Mary's

reflection, "that if it were the fashion to go naked the face would be hardly observed," would strike me with increased force, convinced as I had always been of its truth.

If Lady Mary had been so much impressed by the appearance of so many people "without any distinction of rank by their dress, all being in the state of nature," how much greater an effect might such a scene be expected to produce upon us, who would have the advantage of seeing them engaged in their ordinary avocations, not *posées* with a view to receiving admiration or applause?

We followed our guide along a winding path which led us into the heart of the forest, and after a walk of about ten minutes we came out into an open space, the centre of which was occupied by a large building with low sloping roofs, and wings at each side. A number of small sheds were studded about in different directions, everything bearing the appearance of order and cleanliness. The main part of the centre building was occupied by a single room of large dimensions, the walls of which were covered by pictures. Opposite each other, at each end of the room, were portraits of Adam and Eve, of life size, very similar, I conceive, to the two which I had never been able to see at Ghent. "Here you see depicted," said Pangymnos, "some of the scenes most characteristic of the tenets of our forefathers. Here," pointing to

a man who was gesticulating, in a state of nudity, from a tavern balcony in Covent Garden — "here is Sir Charles Sedley endeavouring to calm the wayward passions of a foolish multitude by philosophical argument. Here is the illustrious Couche-tout-nu immortalised by Sue."

"What does this represent?" asked Granville, pointing to a representation of a man and a woman in the dress of the society, sitting in a garden and reading.

"They are Mr and Mrs Blake," rejoined Pangymnos, "far in advance of their generation, endeavouring to realise the glorious state of their first parents."

We passed by Lady Godiva, by Ganem's mother and Alcolomb, whom I was able to recognise, owing to my intimate acquaintance with the 'Arabian Nights,' and many others, including Tandeme and Picard, whose portraits Pangymnos pointed out with great eagerness. "They, too," he said, "were in advance of their age; Providence should have reserved them for the nineteenth century."

"Should it?" answered Granville. "I know their faces well." (Granville is never at a loss for an apt remark!) I had never even heard their names mentioned before, and it was only after repeated searches that I discovered that they had occupied an important position among the Adam-

ites, a sect whose views coincided with those of Pangymnos to a great extent.

He next pointed out to us the rules of the society hanging up in a corner of the room, together with a list of those who were suspected of having any bias in favour of its views, and I was far from being surprised on seeing amongst them the names of several people I knew. Many of the rules were devoted to the regulation of the social intercourse between members of the community. Marriage was strictly forbidden, perpetual celibacy was the key-stone of the foundation, and the heaviest penalties were provided to guard against any possible infringements which might take place. They held that the distinction between man and woman was completely accidental, that the one had no need of the other, and that by attaching the same duties and responsibilities to both, the object they aimed at would be attained. Obedience to Pangymnos and to the dictates of nature was the highest form of religion; and no deviations from this rule, we learnt, had taken place since '87, except in one instance, where nature and their founder had come into collision.

We spent about an hour in conversation upon these and other matters, and discussed at considerable length the moral influence which the society might be expected to exert upon the rest of the world. Still Granville was evidently not quite

satisfied. In spite of all the information he had received, something remained behind. At last he said, after a pause, "At what hour is your dinner-time?"

"At two o'clock," replied Pangymnos.

It was now five o'clock. After a moment's hesitation Granville continued, "Do you all meet together at any specified time for prayers, or for religious exercise? I should be sorry to miss——"

No, they did not; and Granville next suggested that perhaps we were taking up his time, disturbing him when his family might require his presence. No, he had plenty of time, fortunately.

Granville, at last becoming desperate, asked where the female portion of the community was lodged, and Pangymnos replied, pointing to a building in the distance, "That is the house" (we immediately began to walk in that direction) "in which they will be."

"Will be?" said Granville.

"Yes; for many years we have been awaiting their arrival, and our missionaries in London and Paris tell us that in a very short time we may expect to see them."

"But those rules?"

"We provided them for the future."

We said, Good evening, and immediately returned to Brussels.

"This chapter is hopelessly inconsistent," said

Granville afterwards; "you contradict yourself repeatedly."

"I expected to hear you say so; you merely confirm me in my opinion of the impossibility of advancing new doctrines, and at the same time escaping censure."

"Besides, Lord Bradford will probably forbid its publication."

"Don't you think even he must have heard that profound reflection, to the effect 'that we are all naked underneath our clothes'?"

"I doubt it very much."

CHAPTER XVI.

We left Brussels next morning, and just before starting I got the following letter from Paris, which made both Granville and myself shudder, and congratulate ourselves on having escaped such a fate:—

"HOTEL DES ANGLAIS, PARIS,

"Friday, April 19th.

"MY DEAR STUART,—I am rather ashamed of myself for writing to you from this place, after all my protestations that nothing should induce me to come here. You will be glad to hear that I have suffered for my weakness in every possible way. The Exhibition, as you probably have heard, is

a complete failure, although my chief source of discomfort has consisted in what Horace Walpole called 'that unchristian commodity—country neighbours.' To give you an idea of what I have been doing, I will tell you how I spent yesterday. I began it by going to the Louvre with the Conduits, who do not know a Greuze from a Murillo, and walk arm in arm! After that I went to see Lady Delville, whom I always approach much as Prince Zehn did Mobarec, trying to seize an auspicious moment. I found her suffering from precisely the same infliction as myself, and of course I asked whether she had seen the Exhibition.

" 'I have seen an exposition of English and some packing-cases,' she answered; 'I might just as well have been in Bond Street.'

" 'I did violence to all my notions, and said, 'And yet one likes to see them enjoying themselves.'

" 'I do not agree with you. When I was young the middle class did not travel, nor did they come to London. Now it is impossible to go anywhere without meeting them. Formerly they wore aprons, made puddings, and perhaps had the clergyman to dinner sometimes.'

" 'Still it does good in many ways.'

" 'I do not see that it does any at all,' replied Lady D. 'The women are in a transition state, and the young men are quite unbearable; they

seem to think that society's existence depends upon them entirely, and that it is the duty of every one to suit their convenience; besides, they talk now—in my time they listened.'

"I said I was afraid that that was the case.

"*Maintenant on n'est que poli, autrefois on était galant.* One is obliged to make inquiries about the people one meets, precisely as if one was engaging them as servants. I met my dentist just now. I cannot conceive that a visit to Paris is likely to enable him to take out teeth better.'

"I thought it no use pursuing the subject, so I made my exit, saying, '*Vous m'instruisez par vos leçons, et me gêtez par votre exemple,*'—upon which Lady D., who did not know I was quoting Voltaire, almost bowed to me. You will think that that was enough in the way of visits, but I was obliged to go next to Madame Aimable, who lives quite at the other end of Paris. She was as pleasant as ever, and of course asked me to dinner. I was obliged to own that I had promised to go to the play with the Wigmores.

"*Tiens!—quel drôle de nom.*'

"*'A very old family nevertheless,'* I said, feeling rather like Hamilton in the Initials, when he was explaining the advantages of his social position to Hildegarde.

"*'And what are you going to see?'*

"*'I believe the "Diablesses Extravagantes."*

Mrs Wigmore wanted something pretty for the children to see.'

"Really, I hope they will be edified.'

"After this I had to go to the Exhibition with Lady Deathshead, and as there were no *fiacres*, and it poured with rain, I was quite wet through.

"Then at half-past five dinner in the Palais Royal! Mr Wigmore had ordered dinner. To say that it was bad is to give you no notion of what it was. He stormed at the waiters in execrable French, and they revenged themselves by giving us corked wine. My idea is that they had done it the day before, as fortunately the children were all quite unable to appear, and I at least escaped that infliction. The first act of the 'Diablesses' was half over when we got there. It was an ordinary extravaganza, *assez féerique*, but probably you have seen it. Rather dull. There were a few bad puns, one of which Mr Wigmore caught as the curtain fell, and he was occupied for a considerable time in translating and explaining its meaning to his wife. When the second act began, I saw Mrs Wigmore jump. She turned red and yellow, went through all the colours of a chameleon, and then half got up looking round to see whether everybody would leave the house. The fact was that the second heroine had evidently said, like Madame d'Arcy, 'Je vais m'habiller, ou bien me déshabiller un peu,' and she had succeeded admirably.

Her 'dress' consisted of a *ceinture* and flap, and I momentarily expected my neighbour to stand up and cry out, 'Awa, you scanderluss femaile !'

" 'Mon Dieu, qu'elle est gentille !' exclaimed a Frenchwoman in front of us, which completed poor Mrs Wigmore's horror. She still looked about wildly in the hopes that the world would rush away scandalised, and said to me piteously, 'How lucky it was I did not bring the dear children here !'

"I shall reserve the greater part of my miseries until I get back again to London, which I hope to do the end of next week. People are leaving every day. Morris and Lady Willow go Monday, and many country neighbours, whose conception about one is usually limited to an impression 'that they have known you since you were a child.'—Ever yours,

ENNUI."

"Poor wretch !" said Granville, "he deserves it, although I feel very grateful for his letter. We certainly will not cross till to-morrow, under the circumstances." I was quite willing to wait, so we went that evening to Lille, stopping on our way to see Tournay, where I hunted in vain for some bits of the old china, and found nothing but large manufactures of modern porcelain.

CHAPTER XVII.

Granville had made the discovery of a charming inn at Lille, where the *cuisine* was wonderful, and we felt quite equal to crossing on Tuesday morning. We were quite alone as far as Calais; but to our horror we found that Ennui must have made a mistake. Everybody was there waiting for the steamer, and Morris was the first person who ran up against us. Granville endeavoured to rush off, but in vain. "Ha! ha! yes, very glad to see you. Yes, Paris was full certainly, just what the Duchess of Stilton said to me the other day. I made her laugh. My old friend the Duke of Headland wanted a tutor, very High Church—extremely so, and I was recommending a *pauvre diable* to him, and he said to me, 'Well, Morris, but they say he is Low Church.' I answered, 'Your Grace is misinformed; he doesn't believe in a future state.' Ha! ha! so he was engaged at once."

"Impudent rascal!" I whispered to Granville, "he has stolen that story from St Simon and travestied it."

"Talking of the Duke," he went on, "I was with the Duchess at the opera the other night, and somebody rushed in in morning dress saying he had come to see Orpheus, so I said, 'And Eurydice' (and you-rid-I-see). Ha! ha! Why, there is Lady Willow!"

"That's from Horace Walpole," said Granville.

"Thank God," we both exclaimed as Morris left us, having told us two Joe Millers, the numbers and pages of which we both knew.

We had hardly gone a hundred yards further before I ran against Sir Alfred Laurell. "Ah, how do you do? Everybody here. What have I been in Paris for? Why, you see I am publishing a little volume of poems (you have my last), and I thought a little *jeu d'esprit* about the Exhibition might be happy. I have just hit upon what I think I may venture to call a very felicitous idea. Here is the couplet—

‘Si Paridem palman Veneri tribuisse refertur;
Nunc Paridi summum dat Venus ipsa decus.’

You see the alliteration in the first line: my great difficulty was the rendering of Paris. Lutetia would not do; I thought, therefore, Paris might combine everything: pretty, isn't it? I am going to send it to the Emperor."

"Will there be anything besides that?" asked Granville.

"Well, not much," said Sir Alfred; "I think voluminous publications a mistake; perhaps a sonnet or two—one in which I compare the Prince Imperial to the Exhibition—happy? Yes, and another to the shade of Rabelais—quite novel. The first begins 'Quare puer.'"

"Surely," said Granville, "the *e* is long."

"Of course—of course, my writing is so bad. 'Quare ver' it should be. We shall meet again. Good-bye."

Lady Willow saw us as we were leaving the station and said, "Why did you not come to my party last night at Paris?"

"We were not asked," said Granville.

"What a mistake! I will speak to my cook about it."

"Besides," I said, "we were not in Paris."

"Oh! I thought I saw you yesterday morning."

A little further on was Lord Fryston.

"Well," said Granville, "I hear you had Cora Pearl, the Emperor, Montalembert, and Swinburne to breakfast yesterday."

"No, the day before," he answered.

And this was the result of our leaving England to avoid our fellow-countrymen!

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of course the sea was moving about uneasily, and we saw from the appearance of the steamer which had just come in that we were going to have a rough passage. Granville, however, had rushed off and engaged a deck-cabin, where at any rate we could escape from our acquaintances, and "seigneurifier" ourselves. There is nothing more amusing

than to see the impertinent manner in which passengers walk up and down the deck while the steamer is quite close to the railway-station, and at least half a mile from the nearest wave. Everybody looked pleased, with the exception of a woman dressed in a black velvet gown covered with bugles, who perhaps felt that the choice she had made of a dress was hardly a judicious one, unless she was a very good sailor. Granville had already taken up a very comfortable position upon one of the sofas in our cabin, and was tranquilly reading about the physiology of the stomach. I looked over his shoulder, and marvelled at the imperturbability with which he looked upon such representations as these,¹ and at the astounding strength of his digestion. I could only revenge myself by quoting Greek. So when he said how nice the land looked, I replied—

“Ὅταν δὲ θάλασσα

Κυρτὸν ἐπαφρίζῃ τὰ δὲ κύματα μακρὰ μεμήνῃ

Ἐς χθόνα παπταίνω καὶ δένδρεα, τὰν δ' ἅλα φεύγω.”

I only wished that I could; but my quotation had the desired effect, for Granville dislikes Greek as much as the House of Commons, partly owing to the fact that his knowledge of that language is not quite what it used to be.

¹ I regret to say that the printers have been wholly unable to give any adequate conception of their character, as no types exist for the delineation of the digestive organs.

2 P.M.—An impertinent man comes into our cabin, and hangs his coat upon a peg. He looks like a relation of Morris. The boat is just beginning to move, upon which three women immediately go to the cabin. The woman in black velvet groans. Three sailors cover her with long black things with bits of rope running up and down them. They all ask for money. She sends them to her husband. They all look for him, and can't find him, and then come back to her. She does not look happy.

2.15.—Only six men are walking about. The impertinent man is smoking. Lady Willow has sent for the steward, and wants to know how long it will be before we are at Dover. He says, "It won't be long first." Lady Willow looks happier.

3 P.M.—The impertinent man has come for his coat. He has put away his cigar. The steward brings us two china basins. Everybody else has tin ones. I ask Granville whether the difference of composition has any effect upon the stomach. He does not answer. Lady Willow has sent again for the steward, and asks whether he can see Dover, and how soon we shall be there. He says he "could see Dover if it was clear, and that we shall be there directly."

3.45.—The impertinent man is as helpless as a baby. He has lost his hat, and the steward is ask-

ing him for his ticket. His answer is inaudible. Finally, he says he is going to die. The steward disbelieves him, for he again asks for his ticket. Granville has read a page and a half from the place where the pictures were. I ask him what the causes of sickness are? and what particular part of the body is first acted upon? but he does not answer.

4 P.M.—Everybody is quite quiet. Lady Willow believes that by some mistake she is in a boat which goes straight to America.

4.15 P.M. — Two hundred people are amusing themselves on the pier by watching us land, and I endeavour in vain to give them the impression that I have enjoyed my passage exceedingly.

Scene—SOCIETY.

Mr Middlesex, M.P.—"You have just come, Mr Granville, from Luxemburg. What is the impression there about affairs in the present crisis?"

Granville.—"It is very difficult to give any correct impression of what is the real bias of the inhabitants. I naturally gave a good deal of attention to the subject when we were there (Lord Surrey and three other M.P.'s join us); and although you see, for the most part, French names written up over the shops, the inclination is on the other side, I

conceive. The town itself, I need not say (the four M.P.'s look as if it was unnecessary to give them any information), is simply interesting in a strategical point of view. You know its position" (nobody answers). Granville sees that nobody has been there, and launches forth into a detailed account of the site.

"Is it an important place in the event of a war?"

"No," said Granville. "I have no doubt it would not be attacked. The enemy would pass by it, and it would simply render useless a body of some thousand men; and as France has already two fortresses, by means of which she could threaten the German frontier, I own I do not see the importance of the question."

A blue woman, who came up, asked whether we talked much to the people.

"Yes, a good deal, although they were naturally averse from giving a decided opinion on the subject."

I thought of the difficulty we had in making our cab-driver understand that we wished to turn to the left, and admired Granville's resources.

"Is there any book which gives a fair or at all reliable account of the place?" said a pale-looking M.P., who evidently was going to ask a question about it in the House.

"Well," said Granville, after a little thought, "I

should say that perhaps Baedeker might be relied upon."

"Thank you—in how many volumes?"

"Only one."

For the remainder of the evening, wherever I went, I heard nothing but "Luxemburg in a military point of view," &c., Granville's tone becoming more confident at each repetition; and I felt the advantages of travelling.

EPILOGUE.

We were dining at the Club, and, after dinner was over, I summed up courage enough to say to Granville, "Well, now, I really must find a publisher."

"A publisher? Why, my dear Stuart, you don't mean to say you are going to print what you showed me?"

"Why not?"

"For fifty reasons. Why, everybody will exclaim, 'These two young men have been a very little way, have observed nothing, and have written a great deal. Let these two young men collect all the copies of their journal, and burn them as soon as possible, in order that they may not prepare for themselves a *triste vieillesse*.'"

"Precisely so. I want a new sensation. I have

only two in reserve—that of being abused is the first."

"And the other?"

"The one the prince experienced who complained to his wife of having never been able to shiver—'a basin of cold water full of little fishes poured over one in bed.'"

"Blagueur! at any rate say that I have nothing whatever to do with it."

"Certainly. By the by, I forgot to tell you Marie comes to town next week."

TALES FROM "BLACKWOOD."

RAPPING THE QUESTION.

A TALE OF MODERN MAGIC.

BY THE LATE PROFESSOR AYTOUN.

[MAGA. DECEMBER 1853.]

THERE seems to be a fatality attached to the flower exhibitions at Chiswick Gardens. However brilliant may be the promise of the morning—however cloudless may be the sky at mid-day—it rarely happens that the dense assemblage of the worshippers of Flora can make their escape from the carriage-thronged portals without receiving the bounties of a thunder-plump. These *fêtes* are, in fact, regarded by the milliners, manteau-makers, and haberdashers of the metropolis, as special days set apart in the calendar for their encouragement and benefit; and indeed they appear to be honoured in a marked manner by the peculiar

patronage of St Swithin, who, as all the world knows, followed, in his earlier years, the occupation of a gardener at Winchester.

Some of these *fêtes* are rather brilliant, others are miraculously dull. In all human probability, not one out of a thousand of the visitors has any taste for floriculture, or possesses sufficient botanical knowledge to enable him to approximate in pronunciation to the hideous names inscribed on the zinc pegs of the flower-pots. Few, from their own personal acquirement, could venture confidently to distinguish between an azalea and a rhododendron. But every one likes flowers in the abstract; and it certainly is a great pleasure on a fine summer day to escape for an hour or two from the closeness of London to turf and trees, even though the place of refuge is scarce beyond the boundary of a suburb.

So thought not the fashionable world on a certain day in June last, for hardly any one of note or celebrity appeared in the gardens. There was, however, no lack of attendance, such as it was; and in and round the tents there was such a violent display of gaudy silks and satins as almost eclipsed the flowers. Cockneydom was loose for the day, and shone with exceeding brightness. Very large women in very small bonnets strode confidently along, under the convoy of wheyfaced cavaliers, pitching their remarks and criticisms in

that distressing key, which Shakespeare certainly did not refer to when he commended the gentleness of woman's voice. Habit, however, is second nature; and if a lady is in the domestic custom of making herself heard from the garret to the kitchen, it is not easy for her, on other occasions, to lapse into a softer modulation. There was, of course, the usual forcible transportation of benches for the relief of fatigued parties; as also the delay in procuring ices, at three times the legitimate charge.

"Hallo, Tiverton! Son of the Muses! Is that you?" said a gentleman, who for a quarter of an hour had been supplicating in vain for the meagre refreshment of a lemon-water ice, to a still younger individual, who was desperately attempting to attract the notice of a waiter. "What has brought you here to-day? There is hardly a face that I know in the gardens, and nothing likely to beget inspiration. Are you alone, or doing duty to some respectable dowager?"

"Help me, if you can, like a good fellow, to a couple of ices," said the other, "and I'll tell you all about it in half an hour. In fact, I want to speak to you."

"As to helping you to ice, I can only refer you to that respectable individual in the dirty cravat opposite, to whom, like another Werter, I have been unavailingly pouring my sorrows. However, I shall try a spell. I say, my man, are you aware

that this shilling, which you seem to despise, is intended solely for yourself?"

"Beg pardon, sir! Didn't hear you before! Sorry to have kept you waiting, sir!" said the now aroused waiter. "Three ices, sir—lemon-water? three shillings—all right, sir!"—and he appropriated his tip.

"Now, Tiverton, be off with that acidulated snow; and if you can get rid of your penance within half an hour, meet me here, and I shall drive you back to town. If not, I shall do the sulky by myself. By Jove, though," he added, as he followed his departing friend with his eye, "that is certainly a very pretty girl! I could hardly blame Master Harry if he gave me the slip altogether."

Harry Tiverton, however, contrary to the anticipation of his friend, was punctual; and the two, who were fast allies, were on their way together to town before the verge of the thundercloud appeared.

"Nice girl that," said Mr Augustus Reginald Dunshunner, for the gentleman in question bore no less conspicuous a name. "Is it a case of intention or flirtation, Harry?"

"I don't want to beat about the bush with you, Dunshunner. It is intention of the most serious kind. There are awful obstacles in the way; yet if I do not succeed in my suit to Mary Nightshade, I shall be miserable for ever."

The experienced Augustus slightly coughed.

"It's of no use anticipating miseries," said he. "It strikes me that you have a capital foundation. Independently of your legal prospects (which we may as well put out of view altogether, since it is clear that, if you can't bully a waiter, you need never expect to browbeat a witness), you have some seven hundred a-year, with expectations; and undoubtedly, as times go, you are valuable in the matrimonial market. For a poet, you are remarkably well off; and, depend upon it, few mammas regard seven hundred with indifference. I presume that elderly lady in the sky-blue figures in the capacity of mamma?"

"Mrs Nightshade?—yes."

"Hum—I have no doubt she is an excellent person, but rather cadaverous for my taste. Is she the obstacle?"

"Partly—not altogether. But it's a long story."

"Never mind; I have nothing else to think of."

"Well—the fact is that Mrs Nightshade is a very peculiar woman. She is, I believe, decidedly clever; but has got among such a set of fanatics or impostors, that her head is fairly turned. She began a long time ago with mesmerism; from that she advanced to biology; then she took to table-turning and spiritual rappings, until she has worked herself into the belief that her mattress

is stuffed with ghosts, and that a whole legion of spirits is lodged in the drawers of the side-board."

"And you reckon that an extraordinary instance of delusion, do you? Why, man, half the people of London are possessed with the same idea. You can't go into a drawing-room now, without finding the tables whisking round under the pressure of the conjoined hands! For my own part, I rather like it than otherwise. It is an excellent apology for a little harmless flirtation, seeing that each fresh magnetic impulse is accompanied with a gentle squeeze. I have had some practice, and flatter myself that I am rather an expert spinner of the rosewood."

"Ay—but can you make tables talk?"

"I have no doubt I could, if I were to apply my mind to it—that is, in public; for I trust my own domestic mahogany knows better than to attempt any such impertinence. From what you say, I presume Mrs Nightshade possesses that inestimable gift?"

"Don't she! If you were to believe her own account, the moment she enters her boudoir the furniture begins to hop about, and chirp like a flock of chickens!"

"Yes; the old miracles revive. Probably her upholsterer gets his material from the woods of Dodona. It is amazing how tenacious of life is the classical mythology! I presume that, when she

enters the kitchen, there is a practical refutation of the heretical doctrine that the mighty Pan is dead?"

"Pots, pans, and kettles leap in simultaneous clatter. Ladles lament, and spits are heard to mourn!"

"That last is a fine line, Harry—keep it for your next poem," said Dunshunner. "But now, tell me, what the deuce has all this to do with the young lady? Is she possessed with a similar mania? If so, my advice to you may be condensed in a very short sentence."

"So far from that, she believes the whole thing to be humbug."

"And never tries table-turning on her own account?"

"Never."

"Then, Harry Tiverton, though no lawyer, you are a very lucky fellow. If, under the auspices of such a mother, she can keep herself free from the prevailing idiocy of the age, you may rely upon her sense and discretion. But I don't exactly as yet see the obstacle. All stratagems are fair in love. Why don't you humour the loathly lady—I crave pardon—your future mother-in-law?"

"My dear friend, the mahogany has pronounced against me; as also, I am sorry to say, have the sanctified shades of Tom Paine and Jean Jacques Rousseau. These two respectable sprites have recommended, in the most forcible language, the

union of Mary Nightshade with a certain Dr Reuben Squills."

"Squills? Who, in the name of Hippocrates, may he be?" said Dunshunner.

"Heaven forgive me if I wrong him," replied Tiverton; "but I hold him to be the most hypocritical coxcomb extant. Nature intended him for an ass, but gave him so much cunning that he is able to conceal his true character. He gives out that he possesses the secret of the alchemists, and has discovered the *aurum potabile*. He never produced it, though; there was always one step wanting. But, as to puffing, Mercurius Trismegistus was a perfect joke compared to him."

"And Mrs Nightshade believes in his pretences?"

"Thoroughly and entirely. I heard him, not three days ago, volunteer to present her with a bottle of the genuine Devil's Elixir, as a cordial proper to be taken before the next *séance*. I am sorry to say that, in matters of faith, Mrs Nightshade is not altogether orthodox."

"I concluded as much from your account of her occupations," said Dunshunner. "Your strong-minded woman usually follows the Dudevant model. Rousseau is a natural spiritual correspondent for a lady with such impressions; but I must confess that even posthumous communications with such a beast as Thomas Paine are the reverse of creditable. Then Squills is your rival?"

“Clearly. The mother favours him; and if Mary marries without her consent, she loses her fortune.”

“Which is——”

“Fifteen thousand pounds.”

“Tiverton—you know I have always had a regard for you; but, upon my honour, your conversation to-day has raised you greatly in my estimation.”

“Why so?”

“Because most fellows, in your situation, would have behaved extremely ill to the girl. They would, if they had your means, and were imbued with the poetical temperament, have proposed an elopement at once; or otherwise, which would be equally bad, have quarrelled with the mother, and made a mull of it. Your fine practical sense—now don’t contradict me—has indicated the proper path of duty, which is to secure the lady, along with the requisite amount of stock in the three-per-cents, for the benefit not only of the present, but of the possible coming generation.”

“Believe me, Dunshunner——”

“I know what you are going to say. It is very amiable, touching, disinterested, and so forth. But please recollect that you have made me your confidant, and that my honour is concerned in seeing that you are put in possession, not only of the lady, but of her fortune. If you adopt the humble shep-

herd style, I've done with you ; but if you are ready to go forward for the whole prize, I don't mind if I lend you a helping hand."

"Done ! and even should we fail, Dunshunner, it is worth while making the attempt."

"I presume so, else why this colloquy ? I look upon the lady as yours already—I exert myself simply in respect of the funds. Now tell me, does the old lady traffic with any other magician except Squills ?"

"Oh yes ! There is a certain Mrs Trapes, an American lady, who acts as the Witch of Endor. It strikes me very forcibly that she is in confederacy with Squills."

"Not at all unlikely. Trapes ? I have a strong impression that I have heard that name before. There was, at Saratoga, two years since, a conjuring kind of fellow who fabricated pancakes in hats, multiplied pigeons, and made his wife come through a table into a wicker-basket. He levanted one day without paying his bills. If my memory serves me right, his name was Jonathan J. Trapes."

"Why, my dear friend, these are the very people ! That's the name of the husband."

"And a shambling, knock-kneed, ill-favoured Yankee he was. Ay, indeed ! so Mrs Trapes has taken to spiritual manifestations ? She must, at all events, by this time have a perfect mastery of the tables."

"That table-turning is a very curious thing. Do you know, Dunshunner, they say she is regularly consulted by several members of the Cabinet?"

"Like enough. Old Sir Charles Wood, and a few more of them, stand in woeful need of such a Cassandra. Well, Tiverton, I think I begin to see my way. It will be necessary to get up a counter-movement, and, in the first instance, demolish the Trapes. That can only be done by the apparition of a superior magician. I presume that, if the spirits withdraw their certificates in favour of Squills, he will descend in Mrs Nightshade's estimation?"

"Below zero! But do you really think, Dunshunner, that there is nothing in table-turning?"

"Bah! I am amazed to hear you. When can we have a *séance*?"

"There is to be one at Mrs Nightshade's on Friday evening."

"That's rather short notice; but I think we may manage it. You can take me there, I presume?"

"Certainly."

"I shall appear as a Cracovian Scholasticus."

"Are you serious, Dunshunner?"

"Perfectly. And now, as we are in town, I shall drop you at your club, and proceed to make my arrangements. Let me see you to-morrow at breakfast."

"But I say, Dunshunner, you have not told me yet what you mean to do."

"How should I? I never heard of your affair until half an hour ago. Do you suppose that diplomacy hatches eggs as rapidly as that machine in Regent Street? You really must have a little patience, my friend, until I make my dispositions. Trust me, I shall lose no time. Good-bye."

And Dunshunner drove off.

"I don't know very well what to make of this," mused Tiverton, as he ascended the steps towards his club. "What does he mean by a Cracovian Scholasticus? He is a clever fellow certainly, but still I have misgivings. I wonder, in spite of myself, whether the tables really turn or not? And then these spirit-rappings! To be sure, if Trapes is a mountebank, as Dunshunner says he was, there must be imposition somewhere—in fact, I know the whole thing is a lie, but I can't find it out. Yes, by Jove!" said he, entering the lobby, "it must be an infernal lie! I wish I saw that monster Squills flattened by some locomotive mangle!"

"Ah, Tiverton!" said one of a party of friends, who emerged from a side-room, "you are just in time. We are going up-stairs to have a shy at table-turning!"

When the acute Dunshunner reached his chambers—for he preferred that independent method of existence to every other—he followed the invariable example of the early heroes, by sum-

moning his little foot-page. From what quarter he obtained that imp was a profound mystery. Some of his friends averred that he had selected him from jail; others supposed that he was an emanation from a ragged school; and one or two genealogists maintained that he was the superfluous child of a detective officer. His baptismal appellation was unknown. Dunshunner called him Katterfelto, and to that name alone he answered.

He was as acute as a needle, and, when off duty, as full of tricks as a monkey; nevertheless, he stood in thorough awe of his master, who had educated him for service on precisely the same principles which a gamekeeper applies to a pointer. He was broken in to understand the significance of the slightest word, hint, or sign; and never allowed to exercise an atom of his own judgment against peremptory orders. But, that restriction withdrawn, he was invaluable as a scout. Put him upon a scent, with a definite object, and he almost never failed; his powers—combinative, deductive, and strategetic—were such as we might expect to find in the character of a youthful Fouché.

“Katterfelto,” said his master, when he had called the page to his presence, “do you know anything about spirit-rappings?”

“I’ve heerd on it,” said Katterfelto.

“As how?” said Dunshunner.

“Gammon!” replied the page.

"Very good. Have you ever heard of a man of the name of Trapes, in Oxford Street?"

"Yes. Wife's a middy-wum, as they calls it. He keeps a boy, Joe Parkes, that finds out who the company is, and splits on their friends as has gone to grass. Then the old un brings up their ghostises."

"So you're acquainted with Joe Parkes then? What sort of lad is he?"

"'Cute enough, but can walk round him in five minutes."

"Very good. Now, Katterfelto, observe! You throw yourself in the way of Joe, and persuade him that there is a trap laid for his master on Friday evening next. Recollect, Friday; and if you are pressed, you may say at Nightshade's. I'll give you a note of the names. Tell him there's a trick, and that Dr Squills must not be present. Can you manage that?"

"I'd be verry sorry to serve you, sir, if I couldn't," replied Katterfelto.

"That's enough. There's a crown for you towards the persuading of Joe; get out of him all you can. Next, find out Dr Squills—he lives somewhere in Rupert Street; let me know who his intimate friends are, when he dines, and what he usually does after dinner—in fact, I want to know how he generally spends his evening. If they won't tell you, find it out for yourself. Understand,

Katterfelto, this is no ordinary affair. My credit is at stake," said Dunshunner.

"Wery glad to hear it, sir," replied Katterfelto ;
"I likes what they calls a crisis."

"Vanish !" and Katterfelto disappeared.

"And now," said Dunshunner, resuming his hat and gloves—"now for a short conference with my old friend the Wizard of the North."

If modern necromancy is not quite so solemn and sublime as that of the middle ages, it is at all events much more suitable to the nerves of the agitated spectator. In the old times, it was no joke to pay your devoirs to a sorcerer. In the first place, there was considerable difficulty in finding out his abode ; for it was not the fashion in that barbarous and illiterate period to placard the walls with posters, announcing to the nobility and gentry that Messrs Cornelius Agrippa, Johann Faust, & Co. were in the nightly habit of electrifying crowded audiences, by evoking the spirits of the dead after the manner of Caspar in 'Der Freyschutz'—"subsequent to which the celebrated Spectre Huntsman will display his unparalleled feats in the circus ; the whole to conclude with a Divertissement of Dancing Devils." Such announcements, we say, were not permitted in the narrow-minded days of antiquity. Those who desired to have an interview with a magician were compelled to seek out his abode, as they best might, in some obscure lane or disreput-

able quarter of the city; and, if tradition is to be believed, it was usually in the vicinity of a churchyard. Then again, even after the right address had been obtained, the too curious investigator ran no small risk of being pounced upon by some of the familiars of the Inquisition—gentlemen whose appetite for roast-meat was perfectly unappeasable. These dangers escaped, and the house fairly entered, the visitor had to endure the ordeal of dusky corridors, hazy lamps, waving tapestry, and hollow-slamming doors, until he reached the den of the wizard, whom he found gracefully leaning on an altar in the midst of a circle of skulls. As for what followed—the fumigation—the incantation—the blue lights—and the spectral faces—are not these things written in the volumes dedicated to magic, and in the tales founded thereon by a thousand scribblers of romance? Whereas, in these times of ours, matters are far more agreeably managed. The magician, male or female, advertises, in the morning papers, the terms of admission, and the hours. Parties are made up, at short notice, for post-prandial communication with their departed friends, who are usually so accommodating as to allow full time for the discussion of an extra bottle of claret. The ghost-seers drive, as merry as grigs, to the rooms of the necromancer, which are plainly but comfortably furnished. The apparatus is of the simplest description, consisting merely of a ma-

hogany table, a child's alphabet, and a pencil: the medium appears—the company take their seats—there is a slight pause, and then a rapping—and in less than a quarter of an hour you find yourself enjoying the unreserved confidences of Titus Oates, Thistlewood, Thurtell, or any other free-and-easy spirit who may take a fancy to glide through the keyhole. Such is the noble simplicity of modern magic, as practised in the nineteenth century.

“Dunshunner,” said Tiverton, as they drove together to Mrs Nightshade's, “I can't help being a little nervous about this. Are you sure everything is right?”

“Right?” replied Augustus, “of course it is. I've got the ticking-case sewed into my trousers below the knee, and the musical-box in my waist-band, beside all manner of extraordinary traps in my pockets. What the dence would you wish for more? I have practised this morning till I can make every limb in my body as resonant as a German clock.”

“And you are convinced Mrs Nightshade won't find out——”

“My dear fellow! if she has not found out Mr Jonathan J. Trapes, I flatter myself she will hardly find out me. But I'll tell you what, Harry—if you have the least misgiving, I'll go back at once. You know I only took up this matter to aid you; and although I own I have a month's mind for the fun,

don't let that stand in the way. I'm off this moment if you wish it."

"By no means, my dear friend," replied Tiverton; "I depend on you entirely! I only wanted to know——"

"You wanted, in fact, to know what neither you nor any other man can know, the accidents of the coming hour! Come, my lad—I can make allowance for your nervousness as matters stand, but that's no reason for your throwing cold water upon me. Enough—here's the house. We have at least half an hour to spare before the Trapeses arrive."

"Mind your own cue; remember the verses, and trust implicitly to my discretion."

Mrs Nightshade, as has been already hinted, was a lady of a spectral character. From her youth upwards she had dreamed dreams and seen visions; and rumour went so far as to state that she drove the departed Nightshade, an atrabilious East Indian, into a decline, by a circumstantial narrative of having met his fetich or wraith taking an airing at mid-day in Bond Street, when the original was reposing at Brighton. If that was true, she certainly had the merit of curing her spouse of posthumous vagaries, for he never walked afterwards; and no medium, however powerful, could wring from the unrelenting spirit one word of comfort to his relict. Perhaps he was not altogether sorry to be rid of the connection; for Mrs Nightshade, though de-

cidedly *spirituelle*, was not precisely the kind of woman that most men would have fancied for a helpmate. Not that she was bad-tempered or intentionally disagreeable; but she wished to pass for a strong-minded woman—a character which, in this prejudiced world of ours, is not regarded with peculiar favour. And no wonder. When a lady ventures beyond the sphere of her domestic and social duties, it is at the imminent risk of becoming ridiculous, and Mrs Nightshade certainly spared no pains to exhibit herself in that light. It seemed almost miraculous that she had not infected her daughter with her absurdities; but there are some minds so naturally pure, and so fortified by principle, as to escape contagion; and Mary Nightshade's was one of these. Besides, she had but lately returned to the maternal roof, having resided for some years, for the purposes of her education, with a relative, a very different sort of person from her strong-minded but excitable mother.

Mrs Nightshade was in full force and high spirits. Excitement, according to her creed, was the very essence of existence; and what excitement can be equal to that attendant upon ghostly or demoniacal intercourse? Every orthodox preparation had been made for the *séance*. Harpsichord, sofas, easy-chairs—all the proper paraphernalia of the drawing-room—were removed; a very common-looking table, apparently of deal, with some eight or ten chairs,

constituted the whole furniture; and a couple of argand lamps, purposely reduced, shed a dim light through the apartment.

"I am so delighted," said Mrs Nightshade, after the preliminary courtesies of introduction were performed—"I am so delighted, Mr Dunshunner, that you have been kind enough to join our party this evening. Do you know, Mrs Trapes has had a communication from the ghost of Shelley; and the dear delightful thing has promised to attend and repeat some of his posthumous poetry! You can't think how nice these literary reunions are! Last week we had Horace Walpole up, and he was so very witty and clever! But I forget. Perhaps you have never seen anything of this before, and may be a little sceptical?"

"I should be sorry if Mrs Nightshade were to form such a mean opinion of my understanding," replied Dunshunner, undauntedly. "Even without the advantage of personal experience, I should consider that man as culpably blind who, in the face of the illumination, however faint it may be, which has now reached Britain from awakening America, could question the active existence and co-operation of the unseen world. The science, I can assure you, is no novelty to me; indeed I have spent some of the best years of my life in studying it, under renowned professors, in lands where the doctrine never has been denied."

“Bless me!” cried Mrs Nightshade, “you quite amaze me, Mr Dunshunner! I understood from Mrs Trapes, our distinguished medium, that the science was only discovered by the Americans in 1846.”

“Pardon me, my dear madam, if I indulge in a smile at so preposterous an assertion. I appeal to your own judgment—so high and discerning—whether it is credible that the master-spirits of this terrestrial globe, burning, as we know they are, to communicate their thoughts to us, would have delayed for so many thousands of years so very simple a manifestation?—or that they would have selected, as their first interpreters, the members of the Fish and Fox family? Believe me, it is our own insular arrogance, and the pride of a false philosophy, which have alone prevented us hitherto from drawing spiritual inspiration from the fountains that were never dry.”

“How very odd that is!” cried Mrs Nightshade. “Do you know, Mr Dunshunner, you quite upset my ideas! I never thought of it before, but it does strike me, now you mention it, as very strange that the first manifestations should have been made in America. Do tell me, Mr Dunshunner, when did you first gain any knowledge of spiritual manifestations?”

“I am almost ashamed to specify the date, Mrs Nightshade, since it makes me appear so old,” replied the ambrosial Dunshunner. “But it is now

five-and-twenty years ago since I underwent a course of Rosicrucian philosophy at the renowned University of Pultowa, and was honoured with the diploma of B.S.C."

"B.S.C.!" cried Mrs Nightshade, whose curiosity was now excited beyond all bounds. "What does that signify?"

"Bachelor of Spiritual Communications," replied Dunshunner. "It is not a very high grade, but I was not then an adept. However, following up my pursuits, I afterwards studied at Montenegro, and in Wallachia, where the prevalence of vampirism afforded an excellent opportunity of investigating the lesser phenomena. I derived great advantage from a sojourn among the Copts; and after due examination, was admitted, in the college of Cracow, to the thirty-third degree, the same which was granted to the illustrious Cagliostro."

"I declare you take away my breath!" said Mrs Nightshade, more and more seriously inclining towards the accomplished philosopher. "And so you, too, are familiar with spiritual communications?"

"I ought to be," replied Dunshunner; "for at Cracow we had Virgil up, and made him finish the *Æneid*. It was, however, rather poor, as he had no opportunity of revising. But, so far as my own practice is concerned, I rarely communicate except with spirits of the seventh sphere."

"The seventh sphere!—Mrs Trapes says that

she cannot command any spirits beyond the first!"

"I have no doubt she is perfectly correct. From all I can gather of these American manifestations, they merely amount to IMPISM—the first, easiest, and most deceptive form of any. The fact is, if you will permit me to explain myself so far, that there is a hedge between the material and the spiritual world. In that hedge there is both truth and falsity; but more falsity than truth. It is lined, in the spiritual interior, by the meanest abstracted intellectualities—the scum, as it were, of sublimated idiosyncrasy—the harlequins, clowns, and pantaloons of disembodiment, who affect to have a kind of separate and mimetic existence. These spirits are, to the neophyte, remarkably troublesome. They have no regard for truth, which is not attained until the third stage, and frequently perplex us by their counterfeits. I remember, when I was a Bachelor, evoking the shade of Shakespeare about a disputed reading, and I was answered by a spirit in his character. The explanation he gave was an exceeding bad one—I see it has been recently adopted by Mr Collier—but, when I came thoroughly to investigate the matter, it turned out that my correspondent was the spirit of young Ireland, the forger."

"So you don't think that Mrs Trapes's spiritual friends can be depended on?" asked Mrs Nightshade.

"If they belong to the first or second sphere, I should say decidedly not," replied Dunshunner. "They have, in that state, no affinity with crystals, and cannot, by any possibility, make themselves visually apparent."

"And can any spirits do so?" inquired Mrs Nightshade.

"I believe it is in my power to satisfy you on that point immediately," replied Dunshunner. "May I use the liberty of summoning my familiar?" and he applied a silver whistle to his lips.

The door instantly opened, and the apparition of Katterfelto elicited a slight scream from the ladies. The page was tastefully attired in a close suit of dark crimson faced with black, which set off his elvish figure and face to great advantage, whilst a small red cap with a single cock's feather gave him quite the air of a succubus. He carried an oblong morocco case.

"Master, I am here!" quoth Katterfelto, in a tone that would have done credit to the juvenile apparition in Macbeth.

"Good. My crystal — disappear!" Katterfelto vanished in a sumerset.

"This ball, my dear madam," continued Dunshunner, opening the case and displaying a translucent sphere, "once belonged to the renowned Cornelius Agrippa. It has many virtues, some of which can be discovered only by the patient adept ;

but even the uninitiated eye can be convinced that it is the abode of the superior intelligences."

"Dear me, Mr Dunshunner, what a man you are!" said Mrs Nightshade. "Do you know, I am positively quite frightened for you? And then that odd little creature there, that seemed to come up through the carpet! Upon my word, I begin to suspect that you are a very terrible sort of person. But do let me have a peep at the globe. I shall certainly die if I see a spirit!"

"I would not for the world be the means of causing such an irreparable loss to society," said the polite Dunshunner. "But I fear there is an obstacle in the way of your wishes. The spirits—that is, those of the higher grades—do not make themselves visible to every one. There are some little matters to which they attach singular importance; in fact, I don't think there has ever been an instance of their appearing to married persons——"

"How absurd! and yet how very odd, too! That is exactly what the Cairo magician says."

"Precisely. He operates with a few drops of ink in the palm of a child's hand; but the principle is quite the same. I am afraid, Mrs Nightshade, that neither you nor I are qualified to behold the spirits."

"What! are you married, Mr Dunshunner?" asked the widow with considerable interest.

"I left a wife in the tents of Araby the Blest. Zorayda—but it boots not speaking of her now! I am satisfied that if Miss Nightshade would be kind enough to take the glass, some spirit would at once become apparent."

"Of course she will! Mary, my dear,—come here and look at the spirits"

"O mamma! I am sure I shall faint if I see anything——"

"Nonsense, child! Did I faint when I saw your father's ghost before the poor dear man died?"

"And I can assure Miss Nightshade," observed Dunshunner, "that the higher intelligences are far too gentlemanly in their feelings to assume any shape that might alarm so fair and innocent a spectator."

Thus assured, Miss Nightshade, who during the previous colloquy had been conversing confidentially with Tiverton, took the glass, and began to gaze into it with laudable perseverance. After a short interval she exclaimed—

"How very strange it is! Everything seemed to whirl round at first, and now there are distinct shapes. I see something like a corridor, with pillars of amethyst and gold—and now there is a throne, and a figure on it. How very beautiful!"

"I anticipated as much," remarked Dunshunner, calmly. "How is the figure clothed?"

“In azure ; and there is something like a lozenge on his breast, sparkling with jewels.”

“He wears a crown, and carries a sceptre—does he not ?”

“Yes. Oh how lovely ! but now it is beginning to fade——”

“I congratulate you, Miss Nightshade,” said Dunshunner, replacing the ball in the morocco case ; “your destiny is a fortunate one. It is only to the most favoured of the children of earth that Tulco deigns to appear.”

“Tulco ! Oh goodness gracious—do pray tell us who Tulco is, Mr Dunshunner !” cried Mrs Nightshade, in ecstatic curiosity.

“Pardon me, madam. Not in the presence of the spirit is it permitted me to expound that mystery. But I hear the company arriving. Pray oblige me by saying nothing about this.”

The company was ushered in. There were Mr Gibbetts the celebrated unbeliever, with a red nose, who had reasoned himself out of the conviction of his own existence ; Mrs Gibbetts, a lackadaisical woman, who was so far from agreeing with her spouse, that she believed everything that was told her ; Mrs Horsley Hatchet, an independent lady, who looked very like a demirep ; and Mr Batterson, a young philosopher in spectacles, who was most decidedly a spoon. Close upon their heels came Mr and Mrs Trapes : the former an

impudent, double-jointed Yankee; the latter a woman of some personal pretensions, but with an unpleasant expression of features; for the mouth was furtive, and the eye indicated cunning. All the party having been seated, Mr Trapes took upon him the duty of opening the business, which he did in the following address, delivered principally through the nose:—

“We are hyar assembled to-night, ladies and gentlemen, to witness some of those extraordinary phenomenous, which if our fathers had seen, I reckon they would have jumped out of their shirt-sleeves. Wonderful are the powers of nature, whether understood or not. There are no limits to the mind; for if there were any, nobody would be able to think at all. What prevents me from fancying myself just now at Massachusetts? Nothing. And if I fancy myself there, who knows that I ain’t? Man never dies. Spirits are always immortal, and they come and go where they please. I should know something, I rather guess, about spirits by this time.

“Well, not to make a long story of it—hyar’s a table. I ordered it to be made for this respectable lady as has called us together; and what do you think it is made of? It would puzzle creation to beat it, I can tell you. It is made out of nothing less than the original Tyburn tree!”

“Indeed!” said Mr Gibbetts, looking interested.

"How very nasty!" said Mrs Horsley Hatchet to Dunshunner, next whom she had ensconced herself.

"You may easily reckon that wood knows a thing or two," continued Mr Trapes. "It has seen some motion in its day, and is as lively as a cheese in the dog-days. That's sympathy. I guess now, there must have been upwards of eight hundred criminals——"

"If I might venture to take the liberty, Mrs Nightshade," interrupted Dunshunner, "I would suggest to the learned gentleman the propriety of shortening his harangue. The details, though interesting, are slightly revolting, and not peculiarly gratifying to the ladies, as I observe by their waning colour. Moreover, I may venture to hint that, although most ready to contribute my mite for the purpose of scientific experiment, I was not prepared, nor am I yet, to expend it for the gratification of listening to this gentleman's oratory. I therefore move that we proceed at once to business."

"I have no objection to make to that," replied Trapes, entirely unabashed. "Business is of course the main thing; and I'll trouble you for ten shillings and sixpence all round. If you don't care about hearing my lecture, that's so much trouble saved; and now that the cash is down, Mrs Trapes will tell you whenever there are any spirits in the room."

"What do you think of this, sir?" said Mrs Horsley Hatchet, *sotto voce*, to Dunshunner. "I detest that man; and I can't help thinking that there's some trick going on. I have been feeling about for the foot of the table."

"So I have perceived," replied Augustus, drily. "But we may wait long enough for any spiritual manifestations here, beyond what are produced by purely physical causes. I have seen something of this kind before. But hark! surely there was a rap!"

Undoubtedly it was. A rap, clear, distinct, and free, as if made on or within the table by a piece of watch-spring. Mrs Trapes began to look animated.

"There's a spirit in the room," she said. "I must determine to whom it will address itself;" and after calling the roll without effect, the spirit specified Gibbetts. That gentleman seemed highly gratified.

"I had a kind of presentiment of this," he said; "I have been long expecting a communication. Hand us the alphabet and the pencil, and I shall see if it is the spirit I have hoped for."

S.P.I.—So ran the first letters.

"No doubt of it! It is he!" cried the entranced sceptic, plying his pencil. "How clear was that tap! Eh—what's this—a G?" and he went on "S. P. I. G. O. T. — Spigot? Dammee, who's

Spigot? I never knew anybody of that name. I thought it would have been Spinoso!"

"Don't be annoyed!" said Mrs Trapes, soothingly. "The spirits are apt to be a little playful at first, especially when there is not a settled faith. I have seen that happen fifty times. Will you not try it again? Perhaps your friend will announce himself now."

"Thank you for nothing, ma'am," said Gibbetts, sulkily. "It would take a good deal to persuade me that Spinoso, since his death, has become a brewer. I've had quite enough of it. Anybody else, that pleases, may take the pencil."

There was another rap; this time of peculiar tenderness. Mary Nightshade was indicated as the party interested.

She took the pencil; and the following letters appeared—C. U. P. I. D.

"By Jove! 'Tis Palmerston!" cried Dunshunner.

"Impossible!" said Mrs Trapes; "Lord Palmerston is still alive. It must be the ancient god of the heathen mythology."

"Cupid never dies!" said Mrs Horsley Hatchet, with a meaning look to Dunshunner.

"How should he," replied the intrepid Augustus, "when we are privileged to behold such splendid incarnations of his mother?"

Mrs Horsley Hatchet affected to blush.

"There can be no doubt, at all events, about the name of the spirit," said Mrs Trapes. "I, as the medium, am bound to consider that; and it is for Miss Nightshade to put her own question. But it must be done through me. May I assume the alphabet, and ask whom it is that Cupid indicates as the true psychological partner of Miss Nightshade's existence?"

"I beg that nothing of the kind may be done!" said Mary Nightshade, with considerable spirit. "I desire that no such liberty may be taken with my name under my mother's roof."

"What!" said Mrs Trapes, "not even though Cupid is waiting? See, now, how naturally the rap comes when the pencil touches the letter S."

"This is beyond endurance!" interrupted Tiverton. "If you persist in annoying Miss Nightshade further, I shall use no ceremony, but toss your trumpery alphabet at once into the fire!"

"Not while I stand here to prevent it," said Mr Jonathan J. Trapes, whose duty it was on certain occasions to act as bully. "Have you no respect, young man, for the spirits?"

"The spirits be—— I beg pardon!" said Tiverton. "If there are any here, I daresay my worst wish would not exceed the reality. But I pray you to observe, sir, that you are not now in Yankeeland, where you can outrage propriety with impunity."

"Hush, Tiverton!" interposed Dunshunner. "No doubt Mr Trapes is quite aware that he is not now in Saratoga, where I had the pleasure of making his acquaintance—an acquaintance unfortunately shortened by the unavoidable circumstances which induced him to take his departure. There, now—a word in season works wonders. I am sure that neither Mr nor Mrs Trapes intended to give the smallest offence."

"Certainly not!" said the female medium. "I was only impelled by the spirits."

"Well, I'm darned!" ejaculated the male Trapes. "Glad to meet you again, sir."

"The pleasure is mutual," replied Dunshunner. "But really we must not interrupt the harmony of the evening. I fear the spirits may have reason to complain of something like discourtesy on our part. Did you not say, Mrs Nightshade, that the spirit of Shelley had promised to attend?"

"Oh yes! He gave a distinct promise to that effect to Mrs Trapes."

"Really, then," said Dunshunner, "I think it would be very wrong in us to keep him waiting. May I ask who is the writing medium?"

"I am," said Mr Jonathan J. Trapes. "Shelley is an awful hand at composing, I can tell you. No later than Tuesday last, I copied off nine hundred lines at a sitting. He jogs one's elbow like a locomotive."

"It is to be hoped he will be more merciful to-night. Is the spirit of Shelley in the room, Mrs Trapes? Yes? Thank you. Now, Mr Trapes, please have the kindness to act as amanuensis."

Thus conjured, Trapes sat down, and in a very few minutes produced the following effusion:—

"Is this the spirit life? I guess it is
Another kind of life from that I knew before.
I feel a lightness underspread my senses :
My being is of odours all composed,
Not such as flowers in northern climates breathe,
But rich Savannah waftings of the wild.
One flower there is I love of northern clime—
NIGHTSHADE ! strong-minded woman ! keep thine
own !

Among the nothingness of reality,
And thorough obscuration of all fact,
Be thou alive, acute, and undismayed.
Cherish the voice that, across the Atlantic Ocean,
Breathes to thee notions of infinite going !
I am transcendant, and that thou shalt be,
When from thine eyes the scales of existence fall,
And death from life shall teach thee all in all !"

"Most beautiful poetry !" remarked Mr Batterson, who now, for the first time, opened his mouth. The criticism was not without its effect, as some stanzas

by Mr Batterson were known to have appeared in the columns of the 'Illustrated London News.'

"What do you think of those lines, Mr Dunshunner?" inquired Mrs Horsley Hatchet.

"Simply that Shelley, if he is the author of them, deserves to be breeched in any living academy. But really this will not do! I hope I may, with your permission, Mrs Nightshade, make one remark. Notwithstanding the eulogium of the gentleman opposite, and without preferring the smallest claim to the character of a critic, I am constrained to say that I do not believe that the lines which we have just heard are the production of the spirit of Percy Bysshe Shelley. Of course, I do not suppose that there is any manner of collusion. The antecedents of Mr Trapes (with which I am perfectly familiar) preclude any idea of the kind. Still I am thoroughly convinced that the lines which we have just heard were dictated, not by the spirit of Shelley, but by that of some nameless poetaster, who having failed, during his lifetime, in making a reputation, has, in the spiritual state, attempted this imposture, for the purpose of giving currency to his doggrel."

"It ain't difficult to call anything doggrel," observed Mr Jonathan J. Trapes; "but the question is, whether the spirit of Shelley can produce anything better."

"That is precisely what I wish to try," said

Dunshunner. "There can, of course, be no objection to such an experiment."

"Yes; but where's your medium?" said Mr Trapes. "I guess Shelley's not likely to make himself a fool through me."

"Since you put the question," replied Dunshunner, "it is my duty to inform you, that I am qualified to act as a medium, not only in the first and second grades, but up to the seventh. You have, my good Mr Trapes, allow me to say, something yet to learn. A graduate of Pultowa, and laureated adept of Cracow, ought to know something of the old Chaldean science."

"Hyar's a pretty go! He denies it to be an American invention!"

"Invention, Mr Trapes," said Dunshunner, "is, to say the least of it, an awkward phrase. But you shall judge for yourself; and, not to take any advantage of you, I shall adopt the rapping system, and inquire if the real spirit of Shelley is in the room."

"I'll go you a dollar on that!" cried Trapes.

But he was mistaken; for hardly had the words issued from the lips of Dunshunner, before an earnest and repeated tapping sounded through the apartment.

Both the Trapeses looked amazed, and, in fact, very uneasy.

"Don't be alarmed, madam," said Dunshunner

to Mrs Trapes, who was gathering up her feet as though she had trod on a rattlesnake; "these manifestations are entirely disconnected with furniture. We have arrived at the fact, that the spirit of Shelley is now in the room. Let us now inquire whether he is ready to communicate."

As Dunshunner spoke these words, a strain of unearthly music seemed to permeate the apartment. Mr Batterson grew very white, and requested permission to retire. As he was of no use to the other members of the party, he was allowed to follow the dictates of his own sweet will. There was a general and profound silence, which lasted until the music died away.

"And now," said Dunshunner, "I may as well dispose of a mistake into which my friend Mr Trapes has unwittingly fallen. His doctrine about the media is essentially erroneous. Any one may become a medium in compliance with the wish of the spirit; and I shall put that matter to the test by requesting the late Mr Shelley to indicate his own amanuensis."

The question was put; and Tiverton was selected by an immense multiplicity of raps. He took his place at the table, and, under the influence of supernatural agency, began to write. Trapes, although a hardened exhibitor, showed evident signs of discomposure; in fact, he was so overcome that he had to supplicate for a glass of

brandy to sustain his sinking courage. In an incredibly short time, Tiverton had transcribed the following lines :—

TO MARY.

By night, when spirits wake,
 My spirit wanders free ;
The moonbeam shines upon the lake,
 It lingers in the tree :
The stars above are bright and clear,
Each lustrous as an angel's tear,
But cold, unless, my Mary dear,
 They gaze on thee—on thee !

I cannot tell my love,
 For spirits may not speak ;
But often, in the moonlit grove,
 My breath has fann'd thy cheek.
And often have I felt thy heart
Throb up with an unconscious start,
As though thy being formed a part
 Of mine, so worn and weak !

The rosebud in its leaf,
 It lies so warm and fair,
As if decay nor withering grief
 Could ever enter there.

Mary, thou art that bud to me,
 For in my heart I've folded thee,
 And wintry frosts shall never see
 The rose that is my care !

"Shelley himself!" cried Mrs Horsley Hatchet, sobbingly.

"It ain't so bad," said Mr Gibbetts, who, among his other accomplishments, was a member of an Amateur Musical Society. "I daresay, if it was well set, Hobbs could sing it with some effect. At any rate, it is a great deal better than the former trash."

"It is angelic!" exclaimed Mrs Nightshade. "Mary, my dear! I wonder very much whether it was meant as a compliment to you!"

"I have no doubt I could resolve that question by a simple interrogatory," said Dunshunner. "But the fact is, that we owe some reciprocal degree of courtesy to the spirits; and really, after the exceedingly kind and flattering attention we have met with this evening, it would be extremely improper to detain the author of 'Epipsychidion' any longer. With your permission, therefore, ladies and gentlemen, I shall express to him our sincere acknowledgments for the trouble he has taken, and our thanks for the high gratification which he has afforded us."

"Now, would you like to hear a few words from

Jefferson?" said Trapes. "Or, if you wish it, I can call up the ghost of Benjamin Franklin in a jiffey. Ben's always ready—Or, mayhap, you'd prefer a sentence or two from Robespierre?"

"You are very good, Mr Trapes," said Mrs Nightshade; "but, after what has taken place to-night, I think we may close the *séance*. There are refreshments provided below. Will you excuse me for a minute or two, while I say a word to Mr Dunshunner?"

"Really, my dear Mrs Nightshade," said Mrs Horsley Hatchet laughingly, "you are very *exigente*. I looked upon the hero of the evening as my beau; and you must excuse me if I hint that I cannot spare him long."

"Only five minutes," said Mrs Nightshade. "Mr Dunshunner," she began, after the rest of the company had left the room, "what is your true opinion of these Trapeses? Do tell me, I implore you!"

"In perfect candour then, madam, they are impostors."

"Then how were the rappings produced?"

"By mechanism: which you may easily discover, if, by the aid of a carpenter, you examine the leg and body of that table."

"This is really dreadful, and quite upsets my faith. Mr Dunshunner, you are a gentleman, and can feel for me. For the last three months these

people have been attempting to persuade me that the spirits have been recommending a union between my daughter and a certain individual who shall be nameless."

"Why nameless, my dear madam? You allude, I presume, to Dr Squills."

"Mr Dunshunner, you are indeed a conjuror!"

"Not I! I daresay I might keep up the character; but the confidence you have been kind enough to show me, Mrs Nightshade, renders that impossible. Like Prospero, I now break my wand and bury my book."

"But the exhibition of to-night—so amazing—so triumphant?"

"Was really nothing. I simply wished to show how easy it was to deceive, if people are ready to be deceived; and it was no great exertion of intellect to outwit the Trapezes."

"But the magical sphere—and Tulco?"

"That was an optical delusion, which I could explain in two minutes if it were worth the while. In short, Mrs Nightshade, I must confess myself equally an impostor with those Americans; but my motive was a very different one."

"I am absolutely quite bewildered! What could your motive be?"

"Friendship towards a most deserving and exemplary young man, who loves your daughter dearly."

"I begin to see light—you mean Mr Tiverton?"

"Precisely. He is an excellent fellow, and worth a thousand Squills'."

"Did you write those lines for Shelley?"

"No—on my honour, they were Tiverton's own."

"I never thought he could have produced anything so good! But, since we have arrived at this length, we can have no half-confidences, Mr Dunshunner. I am, in some measure, engaged to forward the suit of Dr Squills to my daughter. He would have been here this evening but for a particular engagement."

"May I venture to ask the nature of it?" said Dunshunner.

"Well—but you must not laugh at me. The fact is, that Dr Squills excused himself from coming here this evening, on the ground that he expected to be magnetised by the shade of Morrison the Hygeist."

"A very sufficient reason! Now, Mrs Nightshade, if you choose, you may set this matter to rest at once. My carriage is at the door. Go with me to the apartments of Dr Squills, and we shall be able to ascertain whether or not he is under magnetic influence."

"You are a strange man, Mr Dunshunner, and I don't know whether I ought to trust myself with you; but I am greatly inclined to make the trial. But won't our friends below miss us?"

"It is a mere step, madam; and the occasion justifies a slight breach of etiquette."

In a few minutes they were admitted into the lodging-house of Dr Squills. A strong odour of tobacco filled the passage, and from the first floor there was heard a chorus, announcing that the performers did not intend to visit their places of individual abode until the morning.

"This is very shocking!" said Mrs Nightshade. "I am certain we must have made a mistake."

"None, whatever, my dear madam," said Dunshunner; "we are, in fact, just in the very nick of time." And he opened the door of the apartment.

There were within six jolly souls—at least six souls that had been jolly, for four of them seemed nearly comatose. The chairman, Squills, was attempting in vain to light his pipe at the gas-jet; whilst the croupier, a dingy-complexioned and remarkably ugly man, was engaged in the reconstruction of a damaged corkscrew.

"Halloo, old fellows! How are ye?" cried Squills, glaring vacantly at the entrants. "Come in and have a noggin! Petticoats, by Jove! Lord help me, it's mother Nightshade!"

"Let us receive her," said the croupier, "in a manner befitting our Society. She is not, like the Somerville, mistress of those philosophic gifts which have churned the stars into that milky way, whereof the constellations are the cream. She has not,

like the Martineau, descended in the diving-bell of political economy, to detach the zoophytes of truth from the naked crag of their existence. She has not, like Boadicea, Deborah, and other prophetesses——"

"Silence, fellow!" said the strong-minded woman; "and you, Dr Squills, explain, if you can, the meaning of this disgusting orgy. Is this your pretended appointment with the spirit of the departed Morrison?"

"There she goes, like a ship on fire, discharging redhot guns!" muttered the croupier.

"It is rather a funny circumstance!" replied Squills, attempting to look facetious. "The fact is, that the late Morrison, for whom I had a profound respect, was otherwise engaged; and one or two friends dropped in accidentally for a little literary conversation.—How's Mary?"

"Sir, you have seen the last of her. My eyes are now fully opened to your true character; and I leave you with that contempt which you deserve."

"Madam!" said the croupier, making an ineffectual attempt to rise, "it is evident to me that you have not, like Tisiphone or Hecate——"

"Stand out of my way, man! and do not touch me at your peril!" said the irate Mrs Nightshade, forcing her way to the landing-place. The four jolly souls that were comatose merely gave a faint hurrah.

During their transit to the lady's house, Dunshunner preserved unbroken silence. Mrs Nightshade was too angry to be hysterical. But no sooner had she reached home, than she said—

“Mr Dunshunner, you will confer a particular favour on me, if you will desire my daughter and Mr Tiverton to speak with me in the drawing-room. I cannot endure the idea of again meeting those American people.”

Augustus readily obeyed; and in a minute or two afterwards the trio were in the drawing-room.

“Mary, my child!” said the strong-minded woman, giving way to the impulse of natural feeling, “I fear I have used you ill, and made you unhappy. Forgive me—I have been foolish; but I hope the lesson of to-night will make me wiser for the future. Mr Tiverton—have you anything to say?”

“Much, dearest Mrs Nightshade! your daughter——”

“Will probably have no objection to unite her destiny with yours! I am glad of it, and you have my blessing, provided you have her consent.”

“It appears to me,” observed Dunshunner, “that, in the absence of previous explanation, the spirit of Shelley did good service to-night in rapping the question.”

“And silence, I trust I may believe, gives consent?” added Tiverton, taking Mary Nightshade's unresisting hand.

MY AFTER-DINNER ADVENTURES WITH PETER SCHLEMIHL.

[MAGA. APRIL 1839.]

I HAD for some days felt myself a little out of sorts, and had suffered from a peculiar acidity of the stomach, and flying pains about my ankles and toes, which I considered to be rheumatic; and as I have always found in any ailment that ever afflicted me, that a few days' relaxation and residence by the sea-side was an infallible restorative, I laid a formal statement of my case before my wife, and with her permission determined to make a holiday, and fairly run away from business; and to domicile myself, and my acidities, and my aches, in her company, in one of the comfortable rooms of Mr Parry's Hotel at Seacombe, on the banks of the Mersey, opposite to Liverpool.

This is not, perhaps, a very usual or a very agreeable time of the year to visit the sea-side, but to me the sea never comes amiss; and, as I have long had experience of the comforts of the hotel where we had concluded to sojourn, my determina-

tion to go there was not suspended for one moment by any impertinent reflection that it was much nearer to the winter than to the summer solstice.

When people are in earnest in their determination to travel, short preparation suffices ; and in a very few hours after I had obtained my wife's consent to migrate, we were seated in an easy gig, rolling along a smooth macadamised road, at the top speed of a good horse, making the best of our way to the nearest railway station.

Once on the railway, a journey from that part of the country to Liverpool is an affair of almost a few minutes ; and, barring an accident,—such as blowing up a civil engineer or two, or running against a contra train, and smashing two or three carriages, and pounding and compounding the passengers, no time is afforded for adventure.

It will, therefore, not be matter for surprise that I and my wife arrived at Liverpool without the occurrence of anything extraordinary ; and as we are both well acquainted with that place, we made no stay there, but, putting ourselves on the deck of a steam-packet, were shortly afterwards landed on the stage at Seacombe, where the portly Mr Smith receives, with such peculiar grace, three-pence from each passenger, for the particular benefit and behoof of the no less portly Mr Parry.

We were soon seated in a comfortable room in the hotel, with a fine glowing fire, and in a con-

dition to order and enjoy a good dinner; with which, at this house, even a gourmand may be provided to his satisfaction at any time on short notice.

But Mr Parry is celebrated for the preparation of that savoury article, turtle soup; and as I entertain for it a respect amounting almost to veneration, I introduced my dinner with the usual modicum of it, following it with a glass of punch—for, according to my creed, the man is a noodle that swallows not punch with his turtle!

Other substantial matters followed, all good in their way, consisting of fish, flesh, vegetables, and pastry; and my wife and I, after dining sumptuously, cracked a few walnuts, and drank a little of the excellent wine that was placed before us, and felt more disposed to fall into a doze than to remove from our quarters.

I arose the next morning, better in my own estimation for even my single night's sojourn by the sea; and I walked on the noble river bank, and enjoyed, with a glowing feeling of delight, the beautiful scenery of this beautiful place.

Immediately in front of our sitting-room window is the extensive and important town of Liverpool, with her long line of warehouses, her spires, and domes, and towers, and, more than all, her docks and quays, and her forest of masts, bespeaking an extended intercourse with all the nations of the

earth, and exhibiting in herself no ignoble epitome of the immense trade of England!

Looking towards the left is a view, extending seawards, varied every moment by the transit of vessels, of all sorts and sizes, struggling to enter into, or to go forth from, the port, with here and there a little boat and its crew, apparently wrestling with the waves for a very existence; whilst on the right is a milder scene—the river appearing to form a smooth lake, surrounded with smiling scenery, and bearing on its bosom a rude inland craft, apparently constructed for the purpose of conveying the produce of the peaceful and quiet country to the bustling and important place where commerce has erected her ever busy throne; and immediately before our hotel flows the majestic stream which causes the bustle, and animation, and prosperity of all around.

It is a scene I believe scarcely to be paralleled elsewhere; that happy mixture of rurality and business—of country and of town—that realisation of simply looking on and almost acting in the scene—that all persons who have once enjoyed it must remember it with satisfaction and delight.

There is no such thing to be seen on the Thames; and if there was, the mob of London would, in one week, destroy one-half of its charms by taking away all its privacy. Even here every year is lessening the beauty of the scene, by the addition of huge

masses of brick and mortar in the shape of houses ; and in a very few years Seacombe will not have to boast the beautiful scenery that at present is its characteristic, and one of its greatest attractions.

I rambled about the whole of that day, inhaling the breeze from the sea, but by no means getting rid either of the acidity of my stomach or the rheumatic sensations in my feet ; and I went into the hotel at five o'clock, prepared again to partake of the good cheer provided by Mr Parry in the shape of a dinner.

I again encountered the steam of his turtle soup, and luxuriated on the green fat, and washed down the last luscious spoonful with a glass of punch, and again there followed those good things which are always to be found in the *cuisine* of the Seacombe hotel.

I had, in the course of my rambling, met with a friend who had accompanied me to dinner, and he spent the evening with me over some excellent port and a cigar, and telling old tales of bygone times, until, in our very thoughtlessness I believe, the third bottle had disappeared ere either of us was aware.

The following morning found me again on the river bank, encountering the breeze in pursuit of health ; but, by some means or other, I felt more out of order that morning than previously, and I had a considerable increase of pain in my feet.

I hobbled about during the day and retired to the hotel at night, in the hope that a basin of turtle, followed by such other agreeables as the attention of my wife was certain to provide, would have the effect of restoring me to my usual state.

I had the turtle, and it was, if possible, more delicious that day than previously ; and I followed it, according to my custom, with a glass of punch. My wife had ordered a small turbot and lobster sauce, with a roasted pig ; of both of which I ate well, and afterwards some pastry. I mention these matters so minutely, on account of a difference of opinion that exists betwixt my medical attendant and myself.

The cloth was withdrawn, and I was in a state of perfect satisfaction and repose, and felt myself completely free from all the maladies of life ! My wife drank her usual glass, and I drank two or three from the bottle of excellent old port that stood on the table ; and, after a vain effort at conversation, my wife put on her spectacles, and took up the newspapers.

I philosophised a while, occasionally sipping my wine, and at length observed the newspaper gradually lowering from my wife's hands, whilst her head also declined ; and her spectacles dropped from her face to her lap, and her cap very soon followed—she was asleep !

I took another glass of wine, and my thoughts

having been previously engaged in a speculation on the results of steam, I resumed the train of my musing.

I mentally compared the rate of travelling before and since the adaptation of steam to travelling purposes. I contemplated the future speed at which we might arrive, and saw time and distance perfectly annihilated—traversed the distance from England to China betwixt breakfast and dinner—and slept one night at Mexico, and the next at Moscow. I considered the advantages that would result to mankind from a more rapid transit of the products of the earth; and saw turtles one day floating off the Island of Ascension, and the next served up to lunch in the shape of soup at Parry's Hotel. I then discussed, learnedly, the various preparations of that delicate animal, and the imitations that have in vain been made of it, and seriously doubted whether or not its municipal use was known to the ancients. I had a strong notion that the savoury meat made by Esau for his father was in fact no other than mock turtle; and was engaged in considering what sort of mock turtle could be manufactured of venison or kid—when I was aware of the door of our sitting-room softly opening, and a tall gentlemanly-looking man entered, dressed in black!

He advanced to the table, and, nodding familiarly, helped himself to a glass of wine.

"Do you know me?" said he.

"No," said I.

"I thought as much," he replied. "I am Peter Schlemihl—do you know me now?"

"Peter Schlemihl?" I answered. "Oh yes—I have heard of you;" but I could not at the moment recollect whether he was the man without a shadow or the man with a cork leg.

A reflection passed through my mind that there was rather an absence of ceremony in his introduction, but I asked him to be seated and inquired his business with me.

"I am come," said he, "to take a walk with you—do you know Liverpool?"

I was not at that moment disposed to take a walk, and a certain rheumatic twinge in my feet gave me to understand that a walk would, at that time, be particularly disagreeable, for which reason, and because I was conscious of something like a repulsive feeling against the man, I resolved, although I am intimately acquainted with almost every nook and corner in Liverpool, to deny my knowledge of the place, and to tell Mr Schlemihl a plain lie.

"Mr Schlemihl," said I——

"Don't mister me," he replied; "my name is Peter—Peter Schlemihl. But do you know Liverpool?"

"No," said I, bolting out the lie at once.

"I thought so, and for that reason I have called

upon you to take you a short walk there. I have an hour to spare, and I believe you like turtle, and there are several houses in Liverpool where turtle is dressed to a perfection that would raise a chuckle in the gullet of an expiring alderman. So come along."

I pointed to my wife. "Pooh!" said he, "we shall be back before she awakens;—so come along."

The bell, announcing the departure of the packet, at that moment rang, and Peter Schlemihl reaching my hat and gloves, put the former on my head, and gave it a whack, by way of settling it firmly down, and taking me by the arm, I felt no power to resist; but almost instantly found myself on board the steam-packet, sailing on my way to Liverpool in company with Peter Schlemihl.

In a few seconds we were across the river and landed on the parade; but, in ascending the steps, some villain with an iron heel to his boot gave my toes such a squeeze that I almost screamed with agony. Peter saw my distress, and putting an arm through one of mine, "Never mind," said he, "I'll provide you with consolation;" and almost before I had time to ask whither we were going, I found myself seated with him in a room in the Mersey Hotel.

Mr Horne was the very pink of civility, and the waiters appeared to know Peter Schlemihl well, and seemed to understand his very looks; for,

although I did not hear him give any order, and although I certainly gave none, two plates of rich turtle were almost instantly before us, accompanied with lemon, cayenne, punch, &c.

"I have dined," said I, as I almost mechanically took a spoonful; but that spoonful sufficed to drive away all remembrance of my pain, and all recollection of my dinner. It was delectable; and we ladled away with the gusto of men tasting turtle for the last time.

"How do you like it?" said Peter, when I had finished.

"It is admirable," I replied; "who could help liking it?"

"Well," said he, "if you are satisfied, put the spoon in your pocket, and let us march."

"The spoon in my pocket!" I answered; "do you wish me to be taken up as a thief?"

"Quite a matter of taste," said Peter Schlemihl; "suppose you had swallowed it by accident—and you opened a mouth wide enough to have admitted a soup-ladle, putting a simple spoon out of the question—suppose you had swallowed it by accident, could you have been successfully accused of theft? And where is the difference to Mr Horne, the landlord, betwixt your putting his spoon in your stomach by accident, and putting it in your pocket by design? In either case, I take it, the loss to him would be pretty much the same; so the

difference, you see, is but in words;—but come along."

So saying, he again put my hat on my head, giving it a thump as before, and putting my gloves in my hand, I was presently walking in his company, at a quick rate, towards the Exchange, without having any clear idea of the way in which we left the turtle room in the Mersey Hotel.

To my surprise, the daylight still continued—people were passing backwards and forwards, and appeared to be in all the hurry and bustle of mid-day business; though, from the hour, I expected to see the gas in full blaze, and the streets deserted of their mercantile population.

"Is it not a handsome pile of building?" said Peter Schlemihl, after he had walked me round the Town Hall, and pointed out its beauties—its portico—its frieze—its dome—and after he had led me round the area of the Exchange buildings, and pointed out each and every part worth notice.

"Is it not a handsome pile of building?" said he.

"It is undoubtedly very handsome," I replied, "and does great credit to the place, but as a piece of architecture, it is by no means perfect; and——"

"For mercy's sake," said Peter, "don't turn critical! If you do, I will desert you. I have known many critics in my time, but I never knew but one sensible man of the craft; and he lived to regret

his taste as a misfortune. No, no ! rules are very necessary in every art, and every science ; but never do you imbibe the notion, that nothing can be pleasing or beautiful that is not strictly according to rule. Now, there is a monument to Nelson—the glorious Nelson—before you ; but, handsome as it is, and suitable as it is to a naval hero, in an important seaport town, and standing on the high mart of foreign commerce, yet I will not allow you to look at it, for it is not strictly correct according to the code critical. By the by, did you ever see that funny affair that the Birmingham gentlemen put up in memory of the same great man ? Living so far inland, they did not perfectly understand what a sailor was like, but they made a little gentleman in black, and having heard of the green sea, they set him up in business in their market-place, as a green-grocer, being the nearest approach to the green sea that their imagination could suggest—what the devil business had Nelson in a market-place ?—they might as well have made him a button-maker !—but come along.”

Peter’s motions were so rapid, that, without perfectly understanding the course of our progress, I found that we were almost instantly walking up and down the news-room, bustling through the dense throng of merchants, brokers, dealers, captains, Christians, Jews, Turks, and men of all occupations—all nations—all creeds—and all colours.

Things bore an appearance of importance, for foreign news had arrived of great and overwhelming interest. Grave looking men, with sage and anxious faces, were poring upon the newspapers at the various tables, intent to know the news of the day; whilst those who could not obtain access to a table, were greedily swallowing the intelligence that could be collected from some loquacious friend.

To my consternation I saw Schlemihl—my companion, Peter Schlemihl!—take the newspapers from the different stands, and put them in his pocket; and, to my equal consternation, I saw him take from another pocket other papers, which he laid before the readers with such adroitness, that the exchange was not perceived; but a man who had an instant before been reading of some disastrous event, now smiled and chuckled as he read that even his best hopes were more than realised. I trembled lest my companion should be detected, for some in the room knew me!

At length the natural result arrived. Men met, and gave different versions of news from the same papers; for Peter's papers did not appear to have been all printed at one press. Contradiction begot argument, to which warm words succeeded, and, in a very few minutes, almost every man in the room was engaged in dispute; and as they were all talkers and no hearers, Peter Schlemihl took me by the arm, and walked me off to the Town Hall,

saying, as we went, "The money-changers, and the dealers in gums and in spices, and in oils and in hides, and in cotton and in fine wool, have forgotten their commissions and their percentages for to-day."

We went into the beautiful and capacious rooms, and admired Chantrey's delicate statue of Canning—the intellectual Canning!—and did not admire a fat, heavy, old Roman looking person, whose bust was appropriately placed in the dining-room.

We walked out upon the gallery; and, after looking for some time at the panoramic scene presented to our view, Peter Schlemihl excited my surprise, and, in some measure, my alarm, by climbing, by some means or other—but which means I do not to the present hour perfectly comprehend—outside the dome to where Britannia sits alone in her glory.

Some seconds elapsed before I durst look at him, for I expected him to drop at my feet a dead and unsightly mass!

I heard a chuckle and a laugh, and, looking up, I saw Peter Schlemihl quietly seated on the lap of Britannia, with one arm round her waist, and looking up into her face with a good-humoured smile, as if he had been saying something arch and amusing; and she—that deceitful woman, that I always looked upon as a cold stony composition—was laughing outright at Peter's fun! She

even leered at him ! But my indignation knew no bounds when I saw Peter Schlemihl take from his pocket a meerschaum, and very calmly fill it and light it, and after taking a few whiffs to see that it was thoroughly ignited, put it in the mouth of Britannia, who began to smoke with all the force and energy of an old fishwife, gently saying, as she began, "Thank you, Peter !"

"Peter Schlemihl !" I called out—"Peter Schlemihl ! come down this instant, and do not take such liberties with that lady. If you do not come down directly I will inform the Mayor and Corporation, and they will punish you well for your impudence ! They will take you before Mr Hall, the magistrate, and he is not a man to allow ladies to be trifled with."

Before I had well concluded the sentence, Peter Schlemihl came sliding down the dome, and dropped directly upon my toes, so that I was put to more pain than even when ascending the steps from the steam-packet.

"It was an accident," said Peter, "quite an accident ! and cannot be helped ; but a little exercise will take away the pain."

To try the experiment, he put his arm within mine, and away we travelled, at a furious rate, towards the Zoological Gardens.

"Step into that cellar," said he, as we were posting along, "and buy me a penn'orth of nuts—

that's a good fellow—and then go into that shop," pointing to one, "and buy me six penn'orth of bird-lime—and if you like it, you may put it in your breeches pocket."

"Nuts and bird-lime!" I answered, "and put it in my breeches pocket!—indeed, I shall do no such thing—these are the only pair of trousers I have with me!—but what are you going to do with bird-lime? surely we are not going a bird-catching!"

"Never you mind!" said he; "will you fetch the articles, or not?"

"No," I answered, "I will not."

"A word of that sort's enough," said Schlemihl—"don't trouble yourself to say anything more"—and slipping into the cellar, he presently emerged, with his hat half-full of nuts, and afterwards going into the shop he had pointed out, he returned from it, rolling betwixt his hands a large ball of something like shoemaker's wax.

"Here they are," said Peter—"and now for the gardens!"

On arriving there, Peter Schlemihl picked up a bit of printed paper, which he palmed upon the porter for an order, and by some legerdemain of his, we were presently inside, cheek by jowl with a blue-faced baboon. On going round, he stopped where a lot of monkeys were confined in a large cage, and Peter smiled at the sight.

"Ah, Jacko! Jacko!" said he, pitching two or

three nuts amongst the solemn-looking assembly. Instantly the whole body was in confusion, leaping, squealing, and snatching after the nuts. He threw another nut, which was caught by a youngster, from whom it was snatched by an older and more experienced thief. Another and another nut followed, and the same scene was repeated; and the sagacious brutes, seeing that Peter was the only man in the nut market, watched his every motion with intense interest.

If he went a foot more to one side than another, away went the whole monkey population in the same direction. If he raised or moved his arm, every monkey was on the *qui vive*, prepared to spring to the land of promise, to where the looked-for treasure was expected to fall; but if he threw a nut in the cage, then for the scuffle and the noise, the squealing, the growling, the scratching, and snatching, and clawing!

He continued to coquette with the monkeys for some time, and succeeded in establishing a very free and very friendly intercourse betwixt himself and them. At length, I saw him rolling a nut about betwixt his hands—he showed it to the monkeys, who all sprang upon their haunches, ready to seize the prize, their eyes glistening like glow-worms with eagerness. He affected to throw it!—they all jumped against each other to the quarter where they expected it to come. Again

he showed the nut, and then, after exciting their attention to the utmost, he threw it amongst them.

There was the deuce of a scuffle in the cage, and the prize was seized by a veteran old monkey, who ran into a corner of the cage to secure it: but, alas! he had no bargain; for, after giving it a squeeze or two, he found his jaws almost fastened together, and gave a fearful squeal. Another monkey seized the nut, and pulled away, until he got something in his mouth, which united him by a string to the first monkey.

Peter Schlemihl threw another nut, and after that another, and another, and the monkeys became like so many infuriated demons, scratching, biting, tearing, and squealing, in their vain endeavours to extricate themselves from Peter's nuts, which, instead of being pure Barcelonas, were nothing more or less than the veritable bird-lime.

They tugged and tore to get it out of their mouths, and as all hands were engaged in snatching and tearing from each other, and, in doing so, skipped and jumped about in all directions, the whole chattering fraternity became completely enveloped in a netting of bird-lime, and made a noise and a riot, such as never before was heard, even in a garden devoted to zoology.

The clamour and confusion of those brutes collected together all the keepers and all the company in the gardens; and great indeed was the indigna-

tion and distress of the former on finding the dirty and adhesive dilemma in which the unfortunate monkeys were placed. A week's holiday, they said, would be necessary in the monkey department, in order to rid them of their netting of bird-lime.

They began to institute inquiries as to the author of the mischief; and Peter Schlemihl, hearing those inquiries take rather a personal turn towards himself, again took my arm, and before I was aware whither we were going, Peter and I were *tête-à-tête* with the lion.

"He is a noble animal!" said I.

"He's up to snuff," said Peter.

He then insinuated his box of Lundy Foot, without the lid, cautiously into the lion's cage, gently obtruding it upon the lion's notice with the end of his stick.

The lion, on seeing it, went leisurely to it, and took a hearty snuff, as if he had been a snuff-taker from his infancy—the cage echoed with a tremendous sneeze, and presently with another, and a third; and he then shook his head, and his eyes watered, and he looked very like an old gentleman mandlin drunk. Again he sneezed, and being impatient at the pungency and inconvenience, he gave vent to his anger in a fearful roar, which attracted the attention of the keepers and visitors, and induced them to come towards us.

Peter Schlemihl observed their movement, and, again taking me by the arm, said—"It is time to be going;" and instantly we were by the side of the ostrich.

"This," said he, "is a gentleman of good appetite and strong digestion, so I will give him something to exercise both," taking from his pocket the head of an axe, and pitching it into the cage as we passed it.

We then came to the elephant, and as he held out his huge trunk, moving it about, expecting a cake or some other thing edible, Peter Schlemihl pricked him severely with the point of his penknife.

Suddenly I heard a fearful crash, and perceived that the elephant had broken down his inclosure, and was rushing towards us in the wildest fury imaginable.

I turned and ran, endeavouring to make my escape, but such was my fear and trepidation, that my knees failed me, and I could not get forward. I seemed to be rooted to the spot!

I saw Peter Schlemihl—the wicked Peter Schlemihl!—pass me! He looked like an overgrown kangaroo, and appeared to bound away from the spring of his tail, with the speed of a Congreve rocket. I heard the elephant coming after me, bearing down everything in his course. I heard Mr Atkins, and all his keepers, and all his visitors,

in full chase. I felt the elephant breathe upon me, and falling down with absolute terror, I felt him pass over me in pursuit of his tormentor, Peter Schlemihl, and, as one of his feet pressed with agonising weight upon mine, I fainted, and became insensible to all that was passing.

Some good persons, I believe, took me out of the gardens, and placed me in safety; and I gradually recovered and proceeded to make the best of my way to Seacombe.

I was going along in a very melancholy mood, when I felt a slap on my shoulder, and Peter Schlemihl was walking by my side, apparently as indifferent as if nothing had occurred.

"That old savage got vexed!" said he.

"Indeed," I replied, "he might well—I hope he caught you, and rewarded you for your folly."

"Thanks for your good wishes," said Peter, dryly, "but you see I have escaped. I made a sudden turn and got amongst the crowd of pursuers, and by that means I blinked him;—but where do you think you are going to?"

"I am going to Seacombe," I answered.

"Indeed, my good fellow, you are not at present," said Peter; "I wish to take a turn in the market, and you must go with me."

In vain I remonstrated—he had hold of my arm, and I felt myself irresistibly compelled to accompany him.

We strolled towards that capacious and convenient market, St John's. We entered and found it crowded; and in lounging round, Peter asked the price of everything from everybody, and gave an order to every trader in the place. He bought of all things, from a cocoa-nut to a round of beef, and pressed into the service every carrier about the market.

As we proceeded, he nodded to one, winked at another, and spoke to a third, and used such familiarities to all, that I quite expected to see him handed out of the market by the police; but he was suffered to proceed without interruption, appearing to possess a licence for doing impertinent things that would not be tolerated in any other person.

At length we stopped opposite to the establishment of Miss Hetty Taylor, the good-looking green-grocer, that once on a time received a Tory aristocratic kiss from Lord Sandon in the face of the whole market.

To that place he was followed by all the tradespeople from whom he had made purchases, all desirous to be paid for their goods; and by all the bearers of the articles he had purchased, desirous to know to what place they were to convey their burdens.

On reaching Miss Hetty Taylor's establishment, Peter Schlemihl, after politely bowing to that lady,

picked out a quantity of turnips, took out a knife, and in an incredibly short space of time, hollowed them out—cutting features in the sides of them with surprising celerity—and converted them into genuine, orthodox turnip lanterns.

How he managed to put lights in them, I don't know, but lighted they all were; and then Peter Schlemihl began to throw them about like the balls of the Indian jugglers; and away they whirled, in incredible numbers and with astonishing velocity!

The crowd was for a time delighted with the gyrations of the turnip lanterns; but, in the course of their whirling about, first one gaping spectator, and then another, received a violent blow on the face, which terminated his satisfaction.

From being anxious spectators, they became violent assailants, and seizing anything they could lay their hands on, they began to pelt Peter Schlemihl. He actively avoided their missiles, and seemed, by his surprising agility, to multiply himself into a dozen men; and seizing the different articles in the carriers' baskets, he set them all in motion in like manner to his turnip lanterns; and so rapid was he in catching and throwing the different articles of flying artillery, that they appeared to possess a perpetual motion, after being once projected from his hands.

All parties now joined in the *mêlée*, and threw things about with frightful activity; and turnips,

carrots, potatoes, geese, ducks, poultry, legs and ribs of beef, cow-heels, pig's heads and feet, eggs, red herrings, and dried bacon, glided through the air with the speed of the wind, crossing and twisting about in all directions, and now and then coming in no pleasant contact with the heads of innocent spectators.

In the midst of these proceedings, I observed Peter Schlemihl rolling his hands together, and then he threw walnuts amongst the crowd with great rapidity. They were caught; and attempts were made to throw them back again, but in vain, for they stuck to whatever they touched; and the people, in their endeavours to rid themselves of such a nuisance, and to impose it on their neighbours, wound themselves about in a skein of bird-lime, from which they were wholly unable to extricate themselves; and they exhibited as much anger and violence as the more serious-looking monkeys, when in a similar predicament.

In the meantime, so deeply and earnestly were all parties engaged, that the commencement of the scuffle was forgotten, as well as all remembrance of its originator, and Peter Schlemihl, pinching my arm, smiled, and said,—“Come, I think the poor people are all got into employment! let us be-gone:” and so saying, we were forthwith in the street.

We made our exit at the side next to the fish-

market, which we entered, and walked round, admiring the beautiful fish that was spread so temptingly on the white marble stalls.

"What do you think of that?" said Peter Schlemihl, pointing with his walking-stick to a large turbot that lay quietly before us."

"He is a fine fellow," I answered, "and the sight of him would be enough to transfix a gourmand with delight."

Peter gave it a rap with the end of his stick, upon which it flappered, and sprang up nearly to the ceiling, throwing somersets in its progress; and, whilst I was watching its extraordinary motions in perfect amazement, Peter Schlemihl was running round the market, striking the fish with his stick, and making them all leap and spring, so that the place appeared more like a piscatory ball-room than a well-ordered market.

The fishwomen and their assistants were all in alarm for their property; and whilst they ran about securing what they could, they treated Peter Schlemihl with such a sample of Billingsgate as I had never before heard; and, fearing that I should come in for some portion of their favours, I ran out of the market with all my might, inwardly, but very heartily and sincerely, bestowing Peter Schlemihl upon the devil, or any other personage that would accept so troublesome a gift.

I was going along at a hasty pace, grumbling

and muttering curses on myself for having been so great a fool as to trust my unfortunate person with so mercurial a companion, when I felt an arm thrust within mine, and, turning my head, I saw Peter Schlemihl!

"Those were lively dogs," said he, "were they not? They gave very animated proofs of being fresh!"

"Oh, Peter Schlemihl! Peter Schlemihl!" said I, "how can you behave so? How can you think of bringing me—an innocent as I am—into these troublesome rows and scrapes? My feet are so painful that I can scarcely put one before the other; and yet, not satisfied with wheedling me here to take a walk, as you pretended, you have kept me in continued crowds, and dangers, and difficulties; and if you proceed, even if I should escape with my life, which is hardly probable, it is more than I can possibly expect, to escape being locked up by the police as being drunk and disorderly, and taken before Mr Justice Hall to-morrow morning, to answer for your atrocious delinquencies.—Oh, Peter Schlemihl, I wish I had never seen you!"

We walked along very moodily, without exchanging another word, and without the way we were taking being observed by me, until we found ourselves opposite to that magnificent hotel, the Adelphi.

"Do you know that person?" said Peter Schle-

mihl, nodding towards Mr Radley, the jolly looking landlord, who was standing there gazing at his house—"do you know that person?"

I knew him well enough, but I was determined to preserve my consistency, so I bluntly answered, "No."

"It is Radley, the landlord of that big house," said he, "a fine fellow. Well, Radley," addressing that gentleman, "how do? Trying to find out a spot where you can hang a bit more iron on your house? Eh! Master Radley? Devilish fond of iron, Radley!"

Radley smiled, and gave a knowing look, which said, as plainly as look could say, "Ah, Master Peter Schlemihl! no amendment on your manners since I saw you last."

We entered the house, and Peter Schlemihl appeared to be as well known, and as well attended to by the waiters there, as he had before been at the Mersey Hotel. I heard no order given, and gave none myself; but I suppose some sign or token must have passed from Peter, for presently I snuffed the fumes of savoury turtle, and a couple of plates, with the usual appendages, were smoking on the table before us.

The turtle was exquisite, and there can be no wonder that, after the troubles and fatigues that I had undergone in company with Peter Schlemihl, I enjoyed my plate, and drained off my glass of punch with almost more than my usual gratification.

"Come," said Peter Schlemihl, when we had finished our turtle, with an air of command, that, on two or three occasions, I had observed him to assume towards me, but the repetition of which was not a bit more agreeable because I had previously observed it,—“Come,” said he, “time for us to trudge.”

“I have trudged enough,” I replied, “and am not disposed to trudge any more.”

“You are not?” said he.

I looked a positive confirmation of the statement.

“Waiter!” he called out, “fetch me in a policeman—this fellow’s about to turn stupid on my hands.”

“What the deuce do you mean by a policeman?” I said, or rather shouted, with some alarm; for, although I stated that I could expect no other than to be locked up by the police, yet I felt anything but a wish to accelerate the attentions of that assiduous fraternity towards myself.

“Mean?” replied Peter Schlemihl, “you left Seacombe under my protection, and I mean to return you safe back if I can; and as you refuse to go with me, I mean to place you in the custody of the police, on the charge of breeding a riot in the market, so that I may have you fast against the time when you may be wanted; and when I have seen you safely disposed of, I mean to inform your wife where she may find you; and I mean to recommend that respectable dozer to bring you some

changes of linen, and other things, to make you tolerably comfortable during the five or six weeks you will have to remain in custody."

"Custody!" cried I, rising on my legs—"what have I done to merit being placed in custody, beyond being seen in company with such an arrant scamp as yourself?"

"Hush, hush!" said Peter, "no names—gentlemen never use such language—all should be peace, and quietness, and repose, and no excitement—such ebullitions of warmth are decidedly vulgar. Here's your hat"—putting it on my head, and settling it as before, with the weight of his fist. "Now you are better, you'll not require a keeper yet;—so come along!"

Taking my arm, we were once more on the *parvé*, and strolling up Bold Street, on our way, as Peter said, to Saint James's Cemetery!

"Rather a solemn place for a lounge!" said I.

"That's all you know of the matter!" replied Peter—"really you men that live in the country and eat vegetables have extraordinary notions!—Why, some people consider it a very interesting and agreeable scene. By the by, I met a friend one day last summer, who excused himself for not taking a walk, by saying that his brother-in-law was come to Liverpool in the last stage of consumption, and he was going to take him a ride by way of amusing him. 'And where are you going

to take the poor gentleman?' I inquired. 'To the cemetery,' answered he—'it is as agreeable a place as any I know.' I was amused at the idea of taking a dying man to the cemetery by way of amusing him, and was at the trouble to go there myself to see if the fact would be as stated, and sure enough my friend and his brother-in-law made their appearance, the latter more dead than alive. He, however, said he was much amused, and he seemed to take such a fancy to the place, that, in a fortnight afterwards, he was provided with permanent lodgings there. So you see," added Peter, "everybody is not exactly of your opinion."

We reached the cemetery, and first went into the little temple and heard part of the service for the dead, delivered in a way that gave Peter Schlemihl, as he said, a very lively idea of what people mean when they talk of that service being performed. He hurried me out, and along the Dead Man's Path, into the cemetery.

We walked round, and, in the course of the lounge, met thirteen incipient Byrons, aged from fifteen to nineteen, each with a broad shirt-collar turned down, and open at the front, to show the throttle, with a black bandana tied sailor-wise.

Four were smoking cigars—real lighted cigars—the puppies!—five held between their teeth imitation cigars, coloured brown, and painted red at the end, to appear like fire, and white, to appear like

ashes—the greater puppies! The remainder were innocent of cigar, either real or imitative.

They all looked melancholy, bilious, and saffron-coloured, and appeared to have been picking out their respective situations in the cemetery.

Peter Schlemihl seemed to think them too contemptible for a joke, for he passed them in silence, except muttering between his teeth, as we approached the last, "This makes a baker's dozen."

Peter stopped near the monument erected to the memory of Mr Huskisson—"There," said he, "you may look, but don't be critical."

"It is a very beautiful statue," I observed; "but, in the name of common-sense, why did the people of Liverpool enclose it in that pepper-box?"

"Upon the same principle," replied Peter, "that governs a man who, when he takes a lighted candle out of doors, encloses it in a lantern. He does it to answer his own purposes, and cares nothing for the public. But I told you not to be critical."

"This beautiful cemetery," said I, "is an admirable adaptation of the old stone quarry, and some of the inscriptions on the stones are very affecting."

"No doubt they are," replied Peter Schlemihl, "to such a spoon as you; but have you yet to learn that in a churchyard no person is allowed to have any other than a good character? Death converts the most contemptible animals that ever blood warmed into tender fathers—affectionate husbands

—faithful wives—dutiful children, and suchlike. The church and the churchyard is the only place to acquire a good character graven in stone. Try your hand at giving some scoundrel his due in his epitaph—venture to write upon a gravestone that on such a day such a person died, well known to all his friends and acquaintances as the greatest rascal that his parish contained; excelling all men in his several vocations of swindler, perjurer, and thief. Try your hand at that, and see how the Church will step forward to prevent your telling the truth. If you persist in your experiment, you will very soon find yourself doing penance in a white sheet, my gentleman! for saying anything but good of the dead.”

Peter’s morality appeared to evaporate with the last sentence; and, slipping his arm in mine, we left the cemetery, and went the shortest way to the docks.

“This is a noble business-like line of docks, all things considered,” said Peter Schlemihl—“their extent from north to south, and their convenient position to the town! But, confound ’em, they are burning tobacco by wholesale in that cursed warehouse, and the stench is sufficient to poison anything human.

So saying, he hurried me from one dock to another, stopping every now and then to look at some peculiar craft, until we found ourselves near the Custom-house.

He took me round that fine building, and after examining and admiring it outside, he led the way into the interior, and from one room to another, mixing and taking part in all the mysteries attending the receipt of custom, and the entering and clearing out of ships, with as much nonchalance as if he had been an inmate of the long-room from his birth.

Business was in its heyday, and the rooms were consequently crowded ; and I was horrified almost to fainting when I heard Peter Schlemihl, very calmly and deliberately, and with great distinctness of voice, ask me to reach a great spring clock which was suspended against a wall, and put it in his pocket !

I looked at him to see if I could discover whether he really was in earnest, but he repeated his request in a tone that seemed to say that he would be obeyed, and muttered something about a policeman, and I felt that I had no alternative but to comply. I got upon a desk, and reached down the abominable clock, and to my surprise it slipped easily into his pocket, and to my greater surprise, no one in the room took notice of the transaction !

I hastened out of the place, determined to get away and return to Seacombe ; and was running along the Canning Dock from the Custom-House, making the best of my way to the Prince's Parade, when I felt a person running alongside of me ; and

turning my head, I found, to my grief and amazement, that I was accompanied by Peter Schlemihl!

He gave me a knowing look; and as we trudged on, shoulder to shoulder, "This is a nice clock we've got," said he.

I was ready to drop with vexation, but it was of no use—it did not in the least disturb the equanimity of Peter Schlemihl.

"Stop!" said he, at length, seizing me by the shoulder—"It is worse than useless to waste our wind in this way. I am going to smoke a cigar—will you have one?—it is a real good one."

I was grown desperate, and was glad of anything for a change; so I took a cigar and began to smoke furiously.

In this mood we went on together, both smoking; but, in my confusion of mind, I was led by Peter Schlemihl past the proper place of embarkation for Seacombe, and as we were proceeding along Bath Street, he put the finish to my distress and rage, by sticking his lighted cigar into a cart-load of hemp that was being discharged at a warehouse.

Instantly the whole was in a blaze—the warehouse took fire—the fire-engines were called for—a crowd collected—a body of police appeared—search commenced for the incendiary—and, to escape from the consequences of this diabolical act of my companion, I made the best of my way to the river-side, and jumped into the first thing

I came to in the shape of a boat, trembling from head to foot, and seeing nothing but the gallows before me.

"Cut the painter," said Peter Schlemihl—for to my utter horror and dismay he was in the boat likewise—"cut the painter, and let her drift with the tide." There appeared nothing better to be done, and I cut the painter, and shoved the boat off; and, as it was ebb tide, I very soon saw myself floating past the Seacombe Hotel, with a fair prospect of going out to sea in an open boat, in the company of that most atrocious of all villains, Peter Schlemihl!

There was but a single oar in the boat; and with it Peter Schlemihl did his best to get her from the shore, and I devoutly hoped that somebody on the Cheshire side of the river, seeing our distress, would come to our relief; but no such thing took place. We neared the Rock Lighthouse—swept past it with the apparent speed of a race-horse; and were very soon at sea, having, during our progress, seen the flames of the warehouse spread and extend themselves into a tremendous fire.

I was cold and shivery, and the rolling motion of the boat occasioned a swimming in my head, and anything but an agreeable sensation in my stomach, and, by the advice of Peter Schlemihl, I lay down at the bottom of the boat, and fell into a doze.

On awakening, I found we were in perfectly

smooth water, upon the bosom of which the boat floated like a gull, quite free from progress or motion; whilst on one hand was the open sea, and on the other a mountainous country, but no house or inhabitant in view.

"Where are we?" I inquired from Peter Schlemihl, though I scarcely expected a satisfactory answer.

"We are off the Isle of Man," answered Peter, "and in a capital place for fishing—did you ever fish off here?"

I answered in the negative.

"You had better begin," said he.

"Begin to fish!" I replied, "and how am I to accomplish that feat, I should like to know, seeing that the only implements on board the boat are you and I and a wooden oar?"

"I'll show you," said Peter; upon which he came to me, and, gently lifting off my hat, he seized me by the hair of my head, and at a jerk threw me over the side of the boat, where he held me with my chin just above, and my body and legs dangling underneath the water!

In a few instants I felt a nibbling at the toes of my right foot, and presently afterwards a similar nibbling at the toes of my left. The nibbling became more urgent and fierce, and at length hurting me considerably, I gave a bit of a plunge with my feet.

"Is there a bite?" said Peter Schlemihl.

"I don't know what you mean by a bite," I replied, "but something is taking liberties that are particularly disagreeable with my toes."

Peter Schlemihl jerked me into the boat with as much ease as he had jerked me out, and to one of my feet hung a big ugly gurnard, whilst something slipped into the water from the other, as he canted me over the gunwale into the boat.

A very short time elapsed before Peter Schlemihl again seized me by the hair and swung me into the sea, holding me as before, and I again felt similar nibblings at my toes, and was drawn up as before with a goodly turbot at one foot, and a couple of lobsters at the other!

He continued his occupation for a length of time, with varied success; but my toes, by the repetition of nibbling and biting, had become so exceedingly sensitive and sore, that I scarcely could endure the pain.

At length a nibble came harder than the previous ones—another and another followed, still more severe—it was no longer a nibble, but a downright severe bite—a bite from something that had powerful mandibles to bite with—the pain was excessive, and too severe to be endured with anything like patience; and, casting my eyes downwards, I beheld, through the clear green water, a shoal of huge black lobsters and crabs, gnawing away at my toes

with all their might and main; whilst other monsters were struggling through the black and ugly mass, endeavouring to force their way that they might have a bite.

Another nip came, so savage that I screamed out, and Peter Schlemihl once more jerked me into the boat.

But his amusement, if amusement he derived from the exercise, was now at an end; for just at that moment the Commodore, Glasgow packet, steamed up, and taking us in tow, we were landed at Seacombe in an incredible short time; and during our passage my well-saturated clothes became thoroughly dry.

Peter Schlemihl, with affected pity for the soreness of my feet, assisted me up to the hotel, and into the room, and placed me in the very chair in which I had been sitting when he first obtruded his unwelcome presence upon me, and, to my surprise, and somewhat to my relief, I perceived that my wife still remained in the doze in which I left her.

Peter Schlemihl also took a chair and helped himself to a glass of wine, and me to another, and, after sitting some time in silence, "Well!" said he, "are you almost recruited?"

"I am much better, certainly," I answered.

"Are you ready to start again?" said Peter.

"Start again! where?" I replied.

"On our walk," said Peter; "surely it is not over yet?"

"Not over yet?" I answered: "If ever any man catches me again walking with you, Peter Schlemihl, I'll give him leave to call me the Wandering Jew!"

"Oh! that is your determination, is it?" said he; "very well, be it so, my fine fellow. In that case, I will take my departure, leaving you this token of remembrance,"—saying which he got up and jumped full five feet high, alighting with his two heavy heels immediately upon my toes, and then deliberately walked out of the room, impudently winking his eye at me as he went through the door-way.

The cruel agony of that jump made me roar out, and roll off my chair upon the ground, from very pain; and my wife, awaking at the noise, raised me up and inquired what was the matter.

"That Peter Schlemihl!" said I—"that infernal Peter Schlemihl! he has lamed me for life!"

"Peter Schlemihl!" exclaimed my wife—"you are dreaming!"

I, however, knew better, and rang the bell, and inquired for Peter Schlemihl; but whether the waiter was in his confidence, or whether Peter Schlemihl had managed to make his entrance and his exit without being perceived, I do not know, but the waiter certainly denied all knowledge of Peter Schlemihl!

I then detailed the whole of my adventures to my wife, commencing with the first obtrusion of Peter Schlemihl into the room, and ending with his jumping upon my toes when he took his final departure.

Still she said it was but a dream !

I took off my stockings, and showed her my toes, red and angry, and evidently glazed and sore from the stamping and trampling, and nibbling and biting, to which they had been subjected ; and I asked her whether, with such proof as that before her eyes, she could entertain any doubt of my having been abused and ill-treated, through the instrumentality of Peter Schlemihl.

Still she persisted that it was but a dream !

I then rang the bell, and requested the attendance of Mr Parry, and every man and woman servant in the house. I described Peter Schlemihl—a tall, thin, gentlemanly-looking man, aged about thirty, dressed in a black surtout, black stock, and dark trousers—a long nose, sharpish features, dark eyes, and black hair—wore his hat aside, a walking-stick in his hands, and a pair of boots on his feet, with plagny thick heels.

One and all declared they had seen no such man !

I begged of Mr Parry that he would search about the premises for him, and desire that stout gentleman, Mr Smith, to prevent his going away by any of the packets. "You will be sure to find him,"

said I, "and he has got the Custom-house clock in his pocket." But stout Mr Smith avers that he has not yet received threepence from him, and to this hour he remains undiscovered, which is to me very remarkable.

I suffered such torment in my feet, that I soon afterwards went to bed, but not to sleep; for the infamous treatment to which my toes had been exposed occasioned such achings and twinges, that I could not close my eyes; and, to make matters worse, when I attempted to rise in the morning, I was unable to put a foot to the floor.

A surgeon (a medical gentleman, the cant phrases for one of those bundles of cruelty) was immediately called in, and, in looking at my toes, he significantly said, "It is the gout!"

Wishing to undeceive him, I gave him a minute narrative of all I had endured—told him the various stampings and squeezings to which I had been a martyr—the nibblings and bitings that I had undergone, when Peter Schlemihl compelled me to do duty for a fish-line off the Isle of Man, and the savage jump with which the brute treated me when he took himself away!

"It is all a dream!" said my wife.

"It is dyspepsia and nightmare," said the doctor, "and the result is the gout!"

It drove me nearly mad to see such obstinacy, but I had no remedy but patience. The doctor

ordered flannel, and my lower extremities were forthwith folded up in yard upon yard of that material. It is now a fortnight since I stood upon my feet, and the doctor is such a heathen as to tell me, without allowing the information for a moment to disturb the gravity of his countenance, that possibly, after a month or six weeks' further suffering, such as that I now endure, I may be enabled to get out on crutches. He evidently thinks that I am possessed of the stoical endurance of a North American Indian, or of one of those ancient martyrs who expiated their sins by calmly submitting to be roasted to death at the stake—alas! I do not possess the unflinching courage of the one nor the pious resolution of the other; but, like an ordinary mortal, look upon pain as by no means a contemptible evil, and as a thing which every right-minded man will carefully eschew, especially when it takes up its abode in the ankles or the toes.

In the meantime I am suffering seriously from his treatment. He is giving me medicine, as he says, to strengthen and restore the tone of my stomach, and that I may not wear the stomach out, he scarcely allows me to put any thing into it; whilst each time my room door is opened there rushes in a perfume of turtle-soup that almost brings tears to my eyes!

Five times every day since I have been under this wicked man's care, as he calls it, I have endea-

voured to convince him of his error, by narrating fully and minutely the particulars of my unfortunate ramble with Peter Schlemihl, but he is one of those thoroughly obstinate men upon whom reason and argument are thrown away ; and my wife, I am sorry to say, is equally hard to be convinced.

She still says, "It was all a dream !"

The doctor still says, "It was dyspepsia and nightmare, and the result is the gout !"

Whilst I contend, with all the confidence of truth, that my ramble with Peter Schlemihl was a real and *bonâ fide* ramble !

Which do you think is right ?

AUNT ANN'S GHOST STORY.

[MAGA. DECEMBER 1864.]

ON the 1st of December, fifteen years ago, I made my first appearance in a county ball-room. That I should choose the 1st of December, fifteen years later, to make my first appearance in print, is probably due to the fact that I have spent the interval in Russia. Considering how extremely fond I have always been of putting my impressions upon paper, and the voluminous correspondence with which the friends of my youth have been favoured during my long absence from England, I can only suppose that it never occurred to me to publish, because I never met a lady in my adopted home who had ventured upon so bold a measure. Moreover I feel certain that, had I hinted at the possibility of so unfeminine a proceeding to my husband—who was then an officer in the Imperial Guard—I should have increased instead of dissipated certain prejudices against the English nation, which, however, had not prevented his asking me to go with him to his own country. That I did so at

the age of seventeen, is the best proof I can give that I am not constitutionally timid—a fact which I will ask my readers to bear in mind in the course of the narrative I am about to relate. I am encouraged to believe it to be worth telling from the circumstance, that no sooner did I reach my old home in England, than a cluster of children, who had not existed when I left it, invaded the sanctity of my bedroom when I was lying down to rest before dinner on the day of my arrival, and insisted upon my telling them myself the ghost story, by virtue of which the name of their near relation was kept ever fresh in their memories. Those thrilling details which I had communicated in my letters at full length at the time, had been repeated by my sister to each succeeding nephew and niece as he or she had arrived at years of sufficient discretion to enable his or her hair to stand on end when terrified; but the luxury of horror which Aunt Ann's story invariably inspired was religiously kept as a great Christmas treat, and was looked upon as quite unrivalled in its line—partly because it was true, and partly because no other aunt in any neighbouring family had ever had any such thing happen to her; a circumstance which was always dwelt upon with great triumph and satisfaction when any other children ventured either to praise their aunts or to discuss ghosts in the abstract. So in the darkening hours of a gloomy

autumn afternoon I told my own story, for I saw it would be impossible to put it off until Christmas ; and when my little audience, whose thorough knowledge of every incident did not in the least prevent them listening with the same rapt interest each time the story was told them, had trotted off, I thought that if they could bear to hear it so many times, some older children might bear to read it once. So now, as the clocks are striking midnight, I stir the fire with a chuckle, for I have not seen a fireplace for fifteen years, and I pull near it my comfortable arm-chair—I have not seen what I call an arm-chair for the same time ; with a fervent blessing on “the stately homes of England,” I shall proceed to give my first experience of my dreary home in Russia.

I had been little more than a year in St Petersburg when my husband was ordered on special service to a distant part of the empire. As the duty he was sent to perform would, in all probability, involve a prolonged absence, it was decided that I should be sent to a chateau which belonged to him in the Ukraine, and there wait his return ; as, however, I was utterly inexperienced in the manners and customs of Russian country life, I was furnished with a guide, philosopher, and friend, in the person of his sister Olga, then a very charming *debutante*, now a very distinguished member of the Russian *corps diplomatique*. It was no wonder,

after having turned so many heads during the winter, that her own began to swim, and that she should look forward with pleasure to the repose of a country life, and the novel task of initiating a stranger into its mysteries. Nor was it without a flutter of excitement that I found myself packed into a roomy travelling carriage, containing my friend, my baby, and the nurse, and followed by two other curiously constructed vehicles, covered with as many goods and chattels as if we were going finally to settle in some newly inhabited colony. When I looked at the servants, bedding, and provisions that were stowed away in and over our three cumbrous equipages, I felt as if I was leading an exploring party, and responsible to the Geographical Society for the results of my observations; indeed, so vivid were the impressions which the incidents of this my first journey through the heart of the country made upon my mind, that I feel sure I should have produced a very good paper for an evening meeting. But now, how monotonous does that well-known way—with its sign-posts over dreary wastes of snow in winter, its bottomless sloughs in spring and autumn, its clouds of dust in summer, its tracts of deep sand, its gloomy pine-forests, and its rolling grass steppes—seem to me! How distinctly do I recall the deserted post-stations where the horses are never forthcoming, and how well I seem to know even the individual horses

when they do come, and can distinguish between the *yamchiks* who are my friends, and those for whom I have an antipathy. As for night quarters, there is not an inn on the whole line of road the rooms of which I have not, at some time or other, furnished with all that portable material which I carry with me on such occasions, and which, if it goes on increasing, will ultimately include a pier-glass and a piano.

How I wondered then at the rapidity with which the servants made things comfortable, and still more at the singular ideas which both they and Olga entertained of what comfort was!

At length, after many days, and now and then a night or two, of travel, we came upon the steppe country, where the forests were more scattered and the population sparser, until at last the whole landscape was a boundless expanse of grass, except in one direction, where a dark mass, like the shadow of a cloud, marked a distant wood. No sooner was it visible than my companion clapped her hands with delight, the horses were urged into a gallop, the carriage bounded more wildly than usual over the deep ruts formed by the winter rains, now baked into troughs that would have smashed ordinary springs, and I needed no other evidence to prove to me that our destination was at hand. I confess my heart sank within me, for there was something inexpressibly dreary in the prospect. My baby, who

had undergone the trials of the journey with a fortitude and a power of endurance truly Slavonic, set up a loud wail, which it seemed to me could only arise from instinctive dread and dismay. I looked round in every direction, and though the range of vision was most extensive, not the vestige of a cottage was visible, not a human being enlivened the scene ; so I sank gently back and in silence, and added my tears to baby's. Fortunately, Olga was too much excited to notice me, and after violently hugging my first-born in a paroxysm of delight, she performed the same operation upon me. Thanks to the moisture she had acquired from the cheeks of that little cherub, she did not discover the tears on mine ; so we plunged into the gloomy recesses of the wood, and I was cheered by seeing a road branch off to the right, which she informed me led to the village. While wondering whether it would be possible to do a little "parish" in it, and secretly making up my mind to open a Sunday-school, I was startled by the hollow sound of the horses' hoofs upon a wooden bridge, and looking out, saw that we were crossing a dry moat, and entering an old moss-grown castle, through a somewhat dilapidated archway.

Immense trees overhung the building, which I had only time to observe was very ancient, but still apparently substantial, and very quaint and irregular in form.

We pulled up at a low door in a grass-grown quadrangle, where stood an old white-headed servitor, into whose arms Olga precipitated herself with the most ardent expressions of joy : behind him a row of domestics evidently gazed with no little awe and respect upon the retinue of town servants we had brought from St Petersburg. Notwithstanding the bustle and the high state of preparation of everybody for our arrival, I felt chilled by a sensation of solitude and desolation I had not experienced since leaving England : the whirl and gaiety of the capital, the constant attendance at court which fell to my lot—the excitement and novelty of a life altogether which never allowed a moment for serious thought—had kept me, as I supposed, contented and happy. Too young to discover cares in life which did not exist, too giddy to seek out occupation I did not desire, I had lived like a butterfly in a beautiful garden, and now suddenly found myself without the flowers, and the sunshine, and the other butterflies that used to pay me court. It was a moment of terrible reaction—even my companion's high spirits failed to make me take a cheerful view of things. When I followed the old white-headed man under the low doorway, and Olga linked her arm in mine, I felt as if he was the jailor, and she was escorting me to a dungeon in which I was to be confined for life. It was very wrong, I know, and I concealed my feelings

as much as I could, but she felt me shudder as I leant upon her arm, and stopped suddenly. "Why," she said, "do you tremble so much? are you frightened? Who told you the castle was haunted?" I had never heard anything about the castle, except that my husband used to make there what he called his "economies," by which he meant that he had a bailiff who lived in it and farmed his property for him; and as for its being haunted, it was a positive relief to my mind to hear anything about it half so interesting. So I laughed at the notion of an Englishwoman either believing in or being afraid of ghosts, and said I shivered because a cold draught came down the passage along which we were passing. "Yes," observed my companion, "since the bailiff refused to live in it, the castle has been quite uninhabited, so that the air feels chilly; but we will have the stoves lighted and make ourselves comfortable. There is not the least danger in the daytime, and at night we will sleep in the cottage, which papa built just before his death, when the ghosts made it impossible to sleep any longer in the castle." As she said this we were standing in a fine old hall, round which were ranged some figures in armour; the walls were decorated with tapestry, and where the wood panelling appeared, it was in many places painted so as to form a picture with the edge of the panel for the frame. Very uncouth

men and women indeed the worthy progenitors of my husband appeared, as depicted upon these ancestral walls—capable of any deed of darkness, and just the sort of people who would continue to live in the castle when they ought to have been reposing like respectable members of the Greek Church in the number of square feet of soil allotted to them. Unfortunately, instead of being buried, some had been put into a family vault, and were perhaps more restless on that account. Whatever be the reason, the current superstition was, that the originals of some of the portraits which adorned the walls of this large hall continued to inhabit the castle, to the exclusion of its present lawful possessors; and an extremely savage-looking Slavonian warrior, with a battle-axe in his hand, and what seemed to be some sort of drum at his feet, was the most generally acknowledged spectre. Why he was chosen, I know not, except that the favourite sound of the ghostly occupant was said to be the rattle of a drum, or rather a thing like a tom-tom, which in those early days was one of the musical instruments of these barbarians. I confess, at the moment I was thinking very little about my husband's restless ancestors; my thoughts were back in my own dear little room at home—that room in which I am now writing this; and I would have embraced the knees of the most disreputable of spectres who should at that moment have

pounced upon me from any of the surrounding pictures, and in the twinkling of an eye have landed me on the door-steps of the paternal mansion. So I turned a deaf ear to Olga's patter about goblins, and gazed vacantly at the gaunt figures in armour, and the gloomy groined roof overhead, and the faded tapestry and ill-drawn portraits. I saw that a massive staircase led to regions overhead, as yet unexplored, and I perceived that it was really true that we were not going to sleep in the castle. Still we seemed to be going partially to inhabit it, for a rather dark passage led from the hall into a really charming drawing-room, where the air had been warmed, and the temperature was agreeable. It was furnished in the most modern Parisian style, and from one window a view was obtained of a straggling cottage or two of the village, the greater part of which was concealed by the wood. That window was quite a consolation to me for the moment, and altogether the room looked habitable and light, and I felt my spirits rising again. A small dining-room opened off the drawing-room, but on festive occasions the large hall I have already described was used. Beyond the small dining-room there was a billiard-room. A passage led from the drawing-room to a glass door, upon opening which we emerged upon a bridge which crossed the moat, but which was covered in partly with glass and partly with planking. This led in-

to a detached cottage, consisting of nothing but bedrooms. The fact that the castle itself was of immense dimensions, and contained any amount of accommodation, and that the family had nevertheless been positively driven out of it by ghosts, and obliged to build a cottage to sleep in, was the most practical evidence I could have desired that, whatever might be the foundation of the belief, it existed pretty strongly. I have been obliged, for reasons which will presently appear, to be thus particular in describing the plan of the castle, and of the principal rooms in it.

The cottage was decidedly an improvement on the gloomy structure we had left. Whereas the castle was surrounded on three sides by dense black pine forest, the trees of which overhung the moat, and almost shot their branches into the upper windows, the view from the cottage windows presented the strangest contrast from my bedroom window: not a tree bigger than a rose-bush was visible anywhere; a neglected flower-garden was bounded by a sunk fence, to which it descended in a gentle slope, and beyond that nothing but grass, with here and there a field of Indian-corn or wheat stubble; still, with the bright sun setting upon it, there was something comforting in its very grandeur and expanse. I seemed to breathe again after having been nearly stifled in the castle. The dungeon-feeling was going off, and a momentary sensation of

butterfly seemed to thrill through me. Two peasant women were returning from work to the village, and as I opened the window I heard them sing. Decidedly I should visit the poor of the parish to-morrow. I would find out an old serf "bad with the rheumatiz, my lady," and take him "Rhus." Then I looked at the women as they walked away, and wondered if I wanted to sell them how I should have to set about it—whether they were fixtures on the land, or if I could let them; and then I thought it would be more philanthropic to hire anybody I saw belonging to a neighbour that seemed unhappy, and that led me to think of neighbours, and I asked Olga who our neighbours were, and how far off they lived. She told me the nearest lived seventeen miles off, but that he was a horrid man, who had ill-treated his wife till she died, and he now lived there alone; and the next nearest was a lady, who had been married and divorced a great many times, and finally got tired of going through the ceremony, but who did not the less prefer the society of gentlemen to that of ladies. Then there was an old lady who lived by herself, twenty-four miles off; and a charming family thirty miles off, whose acquaintance I made some years after. All this was discouraging, and I ceased to be a butterfly again. The growling and grumbling of my English maid, who ever since her arrival in Russia had, for some reason known only to herself, pertinaciously refused

to have her tea made in a *samovar*, and who now said that when I engaged her to accompany me to Russia I should have mentioned that "the family was inhabited with ghosts," did not improve my frame of mind; and when she gave me warning, and announced her intention to go, and I thought how difficult it had been to come, I told her with a malicious satisfaction that I should be the least obstacle she would have to encounter in carrying out her design of returning to her native land; on which, feeling the impossibility of putting her threat into execution, she retorted that it was my fault if I had made her "an Elisabeth, or Exile in Siberia," and burst into a violent paroxysm of tears.

Fortunately the ills of life do not assume large dimensions at eighteen, and in a few days I had quite recovered my wonted spirits. I had explored every nook and corner of the old castle in the boldest and most sacrilegious way. I had opened rooms supposed to be exclusively inhabited by ghosts. I had been stifled with clouds of dust in the course of my investigations. I had taken the skin off my fingers trying to turn gigantic keys in impossible locks, and Olga had kept at a respectable distance behind me, and uttered a little scream every time I had broken into a new room. As to the old steward, he was as much scandalised at the exploratory tendencies of the mistress as at the fine airs of the maid: while I was scrambling up rickety

ladders in spite of all warning about the dangers of their breaking, she was insisting upon hot-water bottles for her feet. To my intense delight, I discovered two very sociable greyhounds at the bailiff's; and as horse-breeding was part of the farm operations, I had no difficulty in getting a new mount every day until I was satisfied; and then how Olga and I used to fly across the country after hares, and how fond the dogs and the horses and the riders all got of each other at last! Then I made acquaintance with the whole population of the village, and though I could not exchange an idea with one of them, I found plenty to do; and I was beginning to forget all about the ghosts, when one night, just as I was going to sleep, in flounces "Elisabeth, or the Exile," gives two violent gasps, and faints dead away by the side of my bed. Not being at all of a nervous temperament myself, I don't generally make allowances for persons addicted to hysteria; but there was not the slightest doubt about the genuineness of Elisabeth's present condition, and at least half an hour elapsed before, by dint of violent remedies, I succeeded in restoring consciousness. Not that I gained much, for no sooner did she "come to"—to use her own expression—than she shut her eyes and "went off" again. This she did three times, and then her anxiety to tell me the story overcame every other consideration, and she sat up, took rather a long

sip of sal-volatile, and commenced. I should premise that I had allowed Elisabeth—who, by the way, never permitted either me or anybody else to call her anything but Phillips, and whose Christian name was Jane—to sit and work in a sort of little boudoir that opened off the billiard-room, in order that she might not mix with the other servants, who, she said, were not “sympatica” to her—she had spent a winter in Rome with a lady before coming to me. “So,” says Phillips, “knowing, my lady, that you would want your riding-’abit the first thing in the morning, and that I should have to let a whole new bit in, in consequence of your ladyship’s always tearing your ’abit exactly in the same place—leastways three mornings running—I hanticipated rather a long job, and so I determined to set about it at once; and your ladyship may imagine the ’orror I conceived when I found, on reaching my apartment after undressing of your ladyship, that I had left my needle-book and thimble, and hother working materials, in my morning bood-war. Well, my lady, I was in a great many minds before I could summing up courage to go into that dreadful castle at this time of night; and it was not without awful trembling—and I may say even haspen-like shakings—that I ’urried along the glass passage across the moat, a-shading of the candle with my ’and. When I opened the door into the billiard-room there come a gust of wind that almost

extinguished my light; and I got so frightened that I turned back again as far as the passage, and there I stopped to take breath, and that gave me time to think of your ladyship's displeasure if I did not get the 'abit ready, and so I gently opened the door again and listened,—but, as Mr Munckting Mills beautifully observes, 'the beating of my own 'art was the honly sound I 'eard,' leastways at that moment, my lady. A moment after, I tripped over a billiard-cue which was prostrated,—and, oh! what another start that give me. I felt as if I was made up of electrical wires and was keeping on having shocks from everything I touched—being continually and perpetually expecting of ghosts made me almost feel as if I was somebody else, especially when the light made my own 'orrid shadow stand up on the wall all of a sudding, right opposite to me. Well, my lady, I was shaking so when I got 'old of my working materials that I run the needles into my fingers without caring, and was running away, feeling always that somebody might be close behind me in the dark for all I knew to the contrary, when of a sudden, as I got into the passage leading from the great hall to the billiard-room—oh, my lady!——" Here Phillips began again to tremble so violently that I poured out some more sal-volatile; and, in order to encourage her, as I administered it, said, "Well, my good Phillips, what did you see?" "Oh, nothing, my lady; nothing visible

could ever make such awful sounds ; and it was right in my ear, not an inch off, as I am a living woman. Just as I come out of the billiard-room off it went with a bang, exactly like the militia."

"Well, but off what went? could you see nothing?"

"Why, first, I never looked ; and, second, it was too dark if I had ; it was just at the corner where the passage turns to the glass door ; but, oh, it was so loud, I wonder you did not hear it here ; it were like a number of little pistols going off quick as light, one after the other. Coming on me of a sudding, and me feeling as I was, and being wound up to the 'ighest pitch at any rate, I gave a scream and a jump, my lady, as I shall never know how many feet in the air ; and I never stopped screaming and running with occasional jumps, and once I fell down, till I came to your ladyship's bedside, where here I shall remain and never again to move. Oh dear ! oh dear !" and Phillips went off into a fit of incoherent lamentation and much sobbing, in the course of which I induced her to get upon the couch, where she finally cried herself to sleep. I was excessively annoyed. In the first place, Phillips was full enough of fancies without silly practical jokes being played upon her to increase them ; and, in the second, she was sufficiently difficult to please without making Russia more intolerable to her than it already was. So spake the sensible, practical Englishwoman ; but in so speaking I am bound to

say she was not telling the real truth. I felt I was deceiving myself. I knew well enough it was no trick of the servants to frighten my maid. There was not a servant in the place who would venture into the castle after we had left the drawing-room. Moreover, had not the very owner, to say nothing of the bailiff, been frightened out of the place years ago, and gone to the expense of building bedrooms? Again, what Phillips said about the nature of the sounds was consistent with general report; it was said they were so loud sometimes that there was not a servant in the place who had not heard them. So much so, that on certain nights of the week the villagers used timidly to approach the castle, and listen; and then, the moment the noises broke out, would run away terrified. The day most patronised by the ghosts, I had heard, was Saturday; but whether our presence had kept them unusually quiet, or whether I was always too sound asleep at the interesting moment to hear them, I know not; but my curiosity was at last violently excited, and my temper somewhat roused: so I determined, *coute qui coute*, to get to the bottom of the mystery, and having arrived at this decision irrevocably in my own mind, I turned round, and went peaceably to sleep. My first injunction to Phillips on the following morning was, that she should not breathe a word of her experience—which I affected to treat lightly—to the Countess Olga or any other soul;

my second, that she should bring my riding-habit torn as it was, as I thought a day with the greyhounds would not be a bad preparation for a night with the ghosts. Fortune favoured my plans, for it so happened that Olga went to bed early with a headache, and left me reading alone in the drawing-room. When the servants came to take away the tea, I told them they might go to bed; and, putting a small reading-lamp by my side, I determined to meet the ghost single-handed. Although I attempted to read while awaiting his arrival, I must confess that I found it impossible to fix my attention — my hearing seemed to have become preternaturally acute, and I had strung my nerves up to a pitch which was perhaps a little beyond what they could bear. It must be admitted, that for a girl to sit quite alone in a castle so notoriously haunted that no man had ventured into it at night, either alone or in company, for years, for the express purpose of waiting for the ghosts to appear, was a very fair test of courage; and I do not think that I incur the charge of timidity because my heart did beat more rapidly than usual on this occasion, and I was aware of a dampness on the forehead, accompanied by that description of chill known as goose-skin, although the room was uncomfortably warm. At last, after a silence of two hours, so oppressive that I almost longed for the ghost, I thought I had done enough for one night, and had

fairly earned my bed. It was not to be expected by the most *exigeant* spectre that I should sit up for him till daylight; and I took up the lamp to go. At the very last moment, however, I was irresistibly impelled to take a look into the Great Hall. I felt I was shrinking from a conscientious discharge of my duty if I left this part of it unfulfilled. So, very much in the same frame of mind as Phillips when she went to her "boodwar," I marched towards the door of the hall. I opened it very silently, partly because I was afraid of the sounds I made myself, and partly because I wanted, if there was a ghost, to see him without his seeing me, though, as I had the light, a moment's reflection would have shown me that would be impossible. I walked straight into the middle of the hall, and turned the light boldly upon all the pictures and tapestry. Everything was still and silent as the grave. I then kept the light fixed upon the other entrance, so that nobody should come in without my seeing it, and walked towards some of the figures in armour to look if anybody was concealed behind them. I had just satisfactorily settled this point when I suddenly heard a deep sigh. My heart seemed to jump at once into my mouth, and I felt as if I should choke; but I put my back against the wall, so as not to be taken unawares, and listened, but not for long. In another moment a long, deep, heavy sigh—so long, so deep, so full of misery,

that it almost amounted to a moan ; but there was no intonation in it. It was like a stage whisper—so clear, and yet without any other kind of sound than that made by wind.

It seemed very near me, almost at my ear ; so near that I turned suddenly round. I found myself actually leaning against the Selavonian warrior with the battle-axe and the drum. My flesh was now beginning to creep, I felt my hair positively rising, and I wanted to run away, but was afraid to leave the wall against which I had placed my back, for it seemed a sort of protection. Again a long, deep sigh, then another. There is something abominable in sighs. They seem a sort of sound that it does not require a regular body to make. A pair of lungs is all that is necessary to sigh with ; a mouth is quite superfluous. One might sigh through a hole in one's throat, or without a head at all for the matter of that. Then there was a sort of catch in one of the sighs that was particularly disagreeable, as if the ghost had been interrupted in his misery, and then it had been suddenly very much increased. I was still hesitating what to do, when the stillness which had succeeded the last sigh was followed by a muffled sound of beating or thumping, very low and regular, and seeming to echo all round the room, but to come from no particular part of it. As it grew louder my fears rose to such a pitch that all my resolution vanished. I rushed at the door

leading to the drawing-room, which I banged after me, but failed to shut out the sound which seemed to pursue me through the drawing-room and along the glass passage, with its increasing volume still ringing in my ears. Into bed, dressed, and just as I was, and with my head under the bed-clothes, I was still unable to shut it out. A pressure on my shoulder made me start with a scream of terror—overtaken at last, my bed not even a refuge! it was too horrible!

The thought had hardly flashed across me when Olga's gentle voice reassured me. She was shaking from head to foot; the sounds from the castle had been loud enough to wake her up, and now as we tremblingly clasped each other we could hear them dying away. The loud drum roll was subsiding into the muffled murmur I had heard at first, and by degrees it ceased altogether.

The next morning Phillips came to me with the triumphant intelligence that all the servants had been roused by the noises in the castle, and that her story, which I had affected to disbelieve, had thus received the most satisfactory confirmation. Poor Phillips! I felt I owed her some apology for the apparent scepticism with which I had treated her story, and admitted to her that I had also heard the sounds—in fact, had passed a very uneasy night in consequence. This seemed to afford her great comfort and consolation, though she

relapsed into disappointment when she found that I steadily refused to admit that the sounds in question could possibly be caused by supernatural agency. Notwithstanding all which very brave language, my nerves were so much shaken by the incidents of this dreadful night, that I could scarcely bring myself to enter the Great Hall even by day, and our evening sittings in the drawing-room were by no means protracted to so late an hour as they had formerly been. Having unlimited confidence in the salutary effects of a great deal of exercise in the open air upon the nervous system, I devoted myself to the destruction of hares, and for some days coursed so vehemently, that a new couple of greyhounds, which the bailiff had bought to relieve his own, were fairly worked off their legs. Still I was as perpetually haunted by the desire of discovering something more about the ghosts as the castle was by those uncanny beings. For some nights I lay awake, listening in vain for sounds, until, at last, one night as I lay wondering whether they would ever come again, the distant roll gradually swelling and as gradually falling broke the midnight stillness. It was not nearly so loud as upon the former occasion, and so far from frightening me, seemed this time rather to inspire me with courage. It was on a Saturday, just a fortnight after my last adventure, and I listened and calmly speculated upon the mysterious sound. I had

been reading rather a heavy book, in which, nevertheless, I had been deeply interested ; for, although young and giddy, I was excessively fond of study, and the repose of country life had suggested to me the expediency of beginning a course of serious reading and following it up. My lamp was burning brightly, every corner of the room was lighted, Olga and all the servants slept between me and the castle,—altogether, my nerves felt so strong and steady, that I quite wondered why I had experienced such terror on the previous occasion ; so I once again resolved to fathom the mystery, and this time I determined that not the whole misery of the universe concentrated into one sigh, nor the tattoo-roll of all the armies of Europe concentrated into one drum, should drive me from the Great Hall. Having, as upon the first night of Phillips's adventure, arrived at this irrevocable decision, I turned round and went peaceably to sleep.

The first thing which my sister-in-law asked me next morning was whether I had heard the sounds in the night. On my admitting that I had, she said that she had not felt so frightened as upon the last occasion, and remarked that she supposed in time we should get quite accustomed to them. I told her I had already so far overcome my original dread, that I had determined in my own mind to make another nocturnal experience, and proposed to her to join me. However brave one may be

individually, a companion on such occasions is always an immense support. To my great delight she readily consented to my proposal. I suggested that we should not wait until the next Saturday night, but try at once, and keep on making experiments every night during the week; by these means, if nothing was seen or heard, we should have become accustomed to the loneliness of the Great Hall, and be better able to face the dangers of the fatal Saturday. I am bound to say that we passed the whole of this day in a fever of excitement and anticipation. I went half-a-dozen times into the Great Hall, impelled thither by a fascination which was quite irresistible. I gazed at all the pictures, examined all the panelling, ascended the massive staircase, which nevertheless creaked even with my light weight, and became familiar with every object which a heated imagination could possibly turn into a ghost. Gaunt figures in armour, with a dim light upon them, are especially ghost-like and supernatural. The bars of their visors always look like long teeth, and they make a nasty rattle when you touch them, extremely disagreeable in the dark. I determined that I should allow my mind to rest on none of these things when I came at night with Olga. Indeed, I tried to take one warrior to pieces, on purpose to feel on intimate terms with him, and succeeded so far that I got his helmet off, and could not get

it on again ; so, as a piece of bravado, I put it under his arm, and made him look more ghastly than ever. Then I went back to the drawing-room, and by the time ten o'clock struck I had worked myself up into such a recklessly defiant mood, that I felt almost intoxicated with excitement. Olga caught the infection. We could scarcely restrain our impatience till the moment came to dismiss the servants : then we jumped up and waltzed round the room, a sort of war-dance of triumph and defiance. Then we lighted every candle, and went into the billiard-room and lighted it up too, careless of what the servants would suppose,—laughing, indeed, at the terror which the unusual illumination would inspire, and which would certainly be attributed to a posse of debauched ghosts ; then we played a noisy game of billiards,—all which, be it remembered, was merely a form of Dutch courage. We were both by this time in our secret souls excessively terrified. Both would willingly have danced off to bed instead of round the billiard-table ; but our honour was at stake, and we kept up appearances magnificently. At last the midnight hour struck, and, arming ourselves each with a cue in one hand and a candle in the other, we marched defiantly towards the Great Hall.

The first thing I saw was my friend the warrior whom I had left with his head under his arm, glaring at me with his black, ghastly cavern of a mouth

and hollow eye-sockets ; but, to my horror and dismay, his head was back again upon his shoulders. As none of the servants would have ventured into the Hall since the comparatively late hour that I had last visited it, I was driven to the unpleasant conclusion that this mailed knight had either put on his own head, or had got an equally unearthly friend to put it on for him. I felt my courage already giving way, so I laughed and talked boisterously, and rapped his helmet soundly with my cue, as I told the story in a loud tone to Olga. She was at the other end of the room, tapping the panelling with her cue, as she laughingly said, loud enough to drown the sound of the ghost's drum. We seemed both penetrated with the conviction that our only chance of safety lay in making as much noise as possible, so I began to tap the panels on my side of the room also. At that moment, the most piercing scream I ever heard issue from mortal throat burst from Olga ; her candle dropped with a crash, and before I could look round she tore wildly past me, screaming, "Fly ! fly ! save yourself !" I needed no further admonition. Never turning my head, I rushed after her to the passage leading to the drawing-room, my candle also going out, and in we both burst to the brilliantly lighted room, pale, panting, and exhausted. Our first care was to double-lock the door by which we had just entered ; and as, in order to regain our

bedrooms, it was necessary to traverse the glass passage, now dark, we rested for a minute while I lighted my candle, and Olga took another out of the candelabra. This gave me time to think that a retreat to the cottage, after all my resolutions, without even knowing what had happened, would be ignominious, so I implored Olga to sit down and calm herself, and give me some reason for her extravagant alarm. I had taken the precaution to provide sundry restoratives in case of our needing them, and in a few moments she had comparatively regained her tranquillity. All she could say was, that as she was tapping the panel on which was painted the Slavonian warrior, the cue was suddenly drawn out of her hand by some invisible influence. She had not let it drop, nor had she brought it back with her. There was no denying the fact; the cue had vanished—but how, remained a mystery. When she felt it being pulled from her hand she screamed, dropped the light, turned and fled, and she could give me no further information upon the subject. Meantime we sat and listened. Not a sound could we hear except the murmur of the wind and the rustling of the pine branches which overhung the window. Feeling that this silence would unnerve us, and reluctant to yield to Olga's entreaties to go to the cottage, I proposed that we should return to the billiard-room, lock both the doors, and play a game of billiards. A

ghost would scarcely be bold enough to enter a room in which there were fifteen candles burning ; and if the sounds were as loud as usual, we would sit there and listen to them safely. After some hesitation, my companion consented to this arrangement, and we went through the form of knocking the balls about, without, however, being able to get rid for an instant of the one thought uppermost in both our minds. Every now and then, by mutual consent, we stopped and listened, but not a sound was audible. I was on the point of proposing another visit to the Hall, when the bang of a distant door checked the words as they rose to my lips, and made us both start and tremble. Then again profound stillness. It was now nearly two o'clock, but as I had quite made up my mind not to go to bed without one more attempt at unravelling the mystery, I determined first quietly to go over in my mind the events which had occurred up to this point, hoping that somehow I might hit upon the clue. As I did so, it flashed across me that upon the occasion of my first visit I heard the sighs when I was standing on the side of the room near the picture of the Slavonian warrior, and that as I leant my back against it they seemed nearer and louder. This then might be the haunted spot, if any one place in this "possessed" old building was more haunted than another, for exactly here it was that Olga had

lost her cue. It was a sort of comfort getting some definite locality to fix upon for investigation, and a comfort to have a distinct reason for revisiting the Hall—my distinct reason being that I wanted to see whether the cue was lying upon the floor, or had really, as Olga maintained, been spirited away altogether. My curiosity on this point was so great that I firmly resisted all her endeavours to dissuade me from going back. I finally promised, however, that we should only go as far as the Hall door, this time on tiptoe; that we should open it gently and look in, and be satisfied, if we saw the cue lying on the floor, to leave it there without venturing further; if not, to rest content with our experiences for the night, and put off our investigations as to what had become of the cue to some future occasion. This being decided upon, we once more screwed up our courage to the sticking-point, and returned to the drawing-room, where everything was still lighted, and stayed for a moment to listen. To my dismay and regret, for I saw my companion's resolution would fail her, we distinctly heard a sort of shuffling sound, as of some one crossing the Hall in slippers. At this time I felt such intense anxiety to know what had become of the cue that I was resolved to go on alone if Olga would not come with me; and when I saw her sink back almost fainting into a chair, I felt it would be cruel of me to urge her

further. Indeed, at the moment she was so frightened that she was unable even to go back to the cottage, much less to the Hall. I therefore crept cautiously on by myself, and, before opening the door into the Hall, leant my ear against it and listened. All silent. I put my hand gently on the old-fashioned latch, which, fortunately, I could turn without noise, and pushed the door softly open. The Slavonian warrior hung on the wall to the left as I entered, and as the door also opened back into the Hall on the same side, I found I should be obliged either to fling it well back or advance into the room in order to have a view of the floor at the foot of the picture, where I expected to find the cue lying. I should remark that, on passing through the drawing-room, it occurred to me to take, instead of a candle, a reading-lamp with a very strong reflector, which, though somewhat heavy, could be made to throw a bright light. Before pushing the door wide open I gave my lamp an extra twist; then, with every fibre strung, I took one bold step into the room, and turned the lamp full on the left-hand wall. What I then saw fairly rooted me to the spot with amazement and dismay. The Slavonian warrior had utterly vanished, and in his room, or I should rather say in *a* room, there appeared a bed, a table with a loaf of bread upon it, a chair, a pair of jack-boots, and a sword hanging above them. For an instant I felt dizzy with bewilderment, then turned

and fled. I was more thoroughly frightened than if a legion of drumming ghosts had marched into the Hall. The *dénouement* was so utterly unexpected, so terribly real, so exactly the reverse of supernatural, that the very contrast was a shock. Spectral figures in white robes, or even the Sclavonian warrior beating his own drum, I could have borne; but a bed which had evidently just been occupied, for the clothes were all tumbled, a pair of jack-boots probably just pulled off, and a half-eaten loaf of bread, were sights infinitely more alarming. I felt that the occupant of the mysterious chamber must be the sort of person who would murder me if he caught me; and my tell-tale face as I rushed through the drawing-room required no explanation. Olga was sufficiently recovered to fly after me, and once more, breathless and exhausted, we reached my bedroom. Here I explained to my sister-in-law what I had seen, and we spent the remaining hours till daylight in accounting for the ghostly sounds, and in vague conjectures as to the identity of the individual who produced them. The servants were somewhat astonished not only to find us up at the earliest hour in the morning, but to receive an order to send the white-headed steward to us. Meantime Mrs Phillips had been made acquainted with our discovery, which she communicated in a tongue of her own invention to the rest of the household, so that when the steward came

we were followed by the whole establishment to the Great Hall. To my astonishment another change had taken place since my last visit. The Slavonian warrior was no longer there, it is true, but no more were the bed, or the table, or the chair, or the big boots, or the loaf of bread, or the sword. Everything had disappeared except the room, and into that we entered. It was built into the solid wall, here nine feet thick. The panel occupied by the warrior had been five feet by seven, and this was the size of the entrance to the room. The dimensions of it were as follows:—eight feet in breadth, twelve feet in length, seven in height—the floor was one foot higher than that of the hall. It was now quite empty, though the stains of liquid spilt on the floor showed it to have been recently occupied. After some difficulty we succeeded in drawing out the panel, which slid noiselessly along its groove, and the warrior gradually emerged once more to the light of day. We examined the edge of it carefully, and did not close it completely for fear of not understanding the trick of the spring. When we discovered the right spot to touch outside the panel, we found it acted almost like a hair-trigger. It was in the crevice of a rock, against which the warrior was leaning. The effect of a very gentle pressure here made the panel roll softly back of its own accord about an inch. As the carving of the panel projected, this opening was

generally in shade, so that it might very well be a little open without being visible. There was no difficulty, supposing I had been leaning within a foot of this apartment, in accounting for the sighs which the occupant had probably resorted to as the easiest mode of frightening me away, before he began to beat his drum. In the same way the point of Olga's cue must have slipped into this opening, and been dexterously snatched out of her hand. We never saw the cue again. The unfortunate part of it all is, "that here my story ends." Who the man who lived in this room was, why he lived there, whether more than one lived there, are all questions which we went on asking until we gave it up in despair. I used often to suspect that the old steward knew something about it; but he pretended to be as much surprised as any of us at the discovery. The most likely hypothesis is that some political refugee had made it his abode, preferring it to Siberia, or something still more summary. Whoever he was, he had enjoyed free lodging for twenty years, as during all that period the castle had been haunted. Judging by the specimen I saw of it, his fare had been of the simplest description; indeed, not the least difficult part of the problem is how he managed to get supplied with provisions at all. Nor is it easy to explain why he left the panel open for us to discover his room, unless we suppose that he did not

give us credit for sufficient courage to revisit the hall after he had taken Olga's cue. Again, he must have seen me standing in the hall, or he could not have known that I had found out his secret, and have decided on utterly abandoning his home for ever and taking all his property with him. Where he took his table and his chair and his bed to is another mystery that will never be solved, more especially as the old steward is dead, who, as I have already said, I have always felt firmly convinced could have thrown some light on the subject.

I need scarcely say that no sounds have ever been heard in the castle since that eventful night. Some of the trees have been cut down, and some of the bedrooms are refurnished, and made habitable and cheerful. The recess itself always stands open, and contains a whist-table; but the Sclavonian warrior often sees the light, for the story is still often told, and without him it would be a ghost story with the ghost left out.

THE BLUE DRAGOON;

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE, FROM THE
CRIMINAL RECORDS OF HOLLAND.¹

BY THE LATE GEORGE MOIR.

[MAGA. AUGUST 1848.]

IN the town of M——, in Holland, there lived, towards the close of the last century, an elderly widow, Madame Andrecht. She inhabited a house of her own, in company with her maid-servant, who was nearly of the same age. She was in prosperous circumstances; but, being in delicate health and paralysed on one side, she had few visitors, and seldom went abroad except to church or to visit the poor. Her chief recreation consisted in paying a visit in spring to her son, who was settled as a surgeon in a village a few miles off. On these occa-

¹ The following singular story of circumstantial evidence is compressed from a collection of criminal trials, published at Amsterdam under the title “Oorkonden uit de Gedenkschriften van het Strafrecht, en uit die der menschlyke Mishappen; te Amsterdam. By J. C. Van Kersleren, 1820.” Notwithstanding the somewhat romantic complexion of the incidents, it has been included as genuine in the recent German collection, *Der Neue Pitaval*. 7 Band.

sions, fearing a return of a paralytic attack, she was invariably accompanied by her maid, and, during these visits, her own house was left locked up, but uninhabited and unwatched.

On the 30th June 17—, the widow, returning to M—— from one of these little excursions, found her house had been broken open in her absence, and that several valuable articles, with all her jewels and trinkets, had disappeared. Information was immediately given to the authorities, and a strict investigation of the circumstances took place without delay.

The old lady had been three weeks absent, and the thieves of course had had ample leisure for their attempt. They had evidently gained access through a window in the back part of the house communicating with the garden, one of the panes of which had been removed and the bolts of the window forced back, so as to admit of its being pulled up. The bolts of the back-door leading into the garden had also been withdrawn, as if the robbers had withdrawn their plunder in that direction. The other doors and windows were uninjured; and several of the rooms appeared to have been unopened. The furniture, generally, was untouched; but the kitchen utensils were left in confusion, as if the robbers had intended removing them, but had been interrupted or pursued.

At the same time it was evident they had gone very deliberately about their work. The ceiling

and doors of a heavy old press, the drawers of which had been secured by strong and well-constructed locks, had been removed with so much neatness that no part of the wood-work had been injured. The ceiling and doors were left standing by the side of the press. The contents, consisting of jewels, articles of value, and fine linens, were gone. Two strong boxes were found broken open, from which gold and silver coin, with some articles of clothing, had been abstracted. The value of the missing articles amounted to about two thousand Dutch guildens. The house, however, contained many other articles of value, which, singularly enough, had escaped the notice of the thieves. In particular, the greater part of the widow's property consisted of property in the funds, the obligations for which were deposited, not in the press above-mentioned, but in an iron chest in her sleeping-room. This chest she had accidentally removed, shortly before her departure,—placing it in a more retired apartment, where it had fortunately attracted no attention.

The robbery had, apparently, been committed by more than one person, and, it was naturally suspected, by persons well acquainted with the house, and with the circumstances of its inhabitants. The house itself, which was almost the only respectable one in the neighbourhood, was situated in a retired street. The neighbouring dwellings were inhabited

by the poorer classes, and not a few of the less reputable members of society. The inner fosse of the town, which was navigable, flowed along the end of the garden, through which the thieves had, apparently, gained admittance, being separated from the garden only by a thin thorn hedge. It was conjectured that the thieves had made their way close to the hedge by means of a boat, and from thence had clambered over into the garden, along the walks and flower-beds of which foot-marks were traceable.

The discovery of the robbery had created a general sensation, and the house was surrounded by a crowd of curious idlers, whom it required some effort on the part of the police to prevent from intruding into the premises. One of them only, a baker, and the inhabitant of the house opposite to that of the widow, succeeded in making his way in along with the officers of justice. His acquaintances awaited his return with impatience, trusting to be able, from his revelations, to gratify their curiosity at second-hand. If so, they were disappointed, for, on his exit, he assumed an air of mystery, answered equivocally, and observed that people might suspect many things of which it might not be safe to speak.

In proportion, however, to his taciturnity was the loquaciousness of a wool-spinner, Leendert Van N——, the inhabitant of the corner house next to that of the widow. He mingled with the groups who were discussing the subject; dropped hints that he had

his own notions as to the culprits, and could, if necessary, give a clue to their discovery. Among the crowd who were observed to listen to these effusions was a Jew dealer in porcelain, a suspected spy of the police. Before evening, the wool-spinner received a summons to the town-house, and was called upon by the burgomaster for an explanation of the suspicious expressions he had used. He stammered, hesitated, pretended he knew of nothing but general grounds of suspicion, like his neighbours; but being threatened with stronger measures of compulsion, he at last agreed to speak out, protesting, at the same time, that he could willingly have spared persons against whom he had no grudge whatever, and would have been silent for ever if he had foreseen the consequence of his indiscretion.

The substance of his disclosure was to this effect:—Opposite the German post-house, at the head of the street in which the woolspinner lived, there was a little alehouse. Nicholas D—— was the landlord. He was generally known among his acquaintances, not by his baptismal or family name, but by the appellation of the Blue Dragoon, from having formerly served in the horse regiment of Colonel Van Wackerbarth, which was popularly known by the name of the Blues. About two years before he had become acquainted with and married Hannah, the former servant of Madame Andrecht, who had

been six years in that situation, and possessed her entire confidence. Unwilling to part with her attendant, and probably entertaining no favourable notion of the intended husband, Madame Andrecht had long thrown impediments in the way of the match, so that the parties were obliged to meet chiefly at night, and by stealth. Nicholas found his way into the house at night through the garden of his acquaintance the woolspinner, and across the hedge which divided it from Madame Andrecht's. Of these nocturnal visits the woolspinner was at first cognisant, but, fearful of getting into a scrape with his respectable neighbour, he was under the necessity of intimating to the bold dragoon, that if he intended to continue his escalades, he must do so from some other quarter than his garden. Nicholas obeyed apparently, and desisted; but, to the surprise of the woolspinner, he found the lovers continued to meet not the less regularly in Madame Andrecht's garden. One evening, however, the mystery was explained. The woolspinner, returning home after dark, saw tied to a post in the canal, close by Madame Andrecht's garden, one of those small boats which were generally used by the dragoons for bringing forage from the magazine; and he at once conjectured that this was the means by which the dragoon was enabled to continue his nocturnal assignations. With the recollection of this passage in the landlord's history was combined

a circumstance of recent occurrence, trifling in itself, but which appeared curiously to link in with the mode in which the robbery appeared to have been effected. Ten days before the discovery of the house-breaking, and while the widow was in the country, the woolspinner stated that he found, one morning, a dirty-coloured handkerchief lying on the grass bank of the fosse, and exactly opposite his neighbour's garden. He took it up, and put it in his pocket, without thinking about it at the time. At dinner he happened to remember it, mentioned the circumstance to his wife, showed her the handkerchief, and observed jestingly, "If Madame Andrecht were in town, and Hannah were still in her service, we should say our old friend the Blue Dragoon had been making his rounds and had dropt his handkerchief." His wife took the handkerchief, examined it, and exclaimed, "In the name of wonder, what is that you say? Is not Hannah's husband's name Nicholas D——?" pointing out to him at the same time the initials N. D. in the corner. Both, however, had forgotten the circumstance till the occurrence of the robbery naturally recalled it to the husband's mind.

The woolspinner told his story simply; his conclusions appeared unstrained: suspicion became strongly directed against the Blue Dragoon, and these suspicions were corroborated by another circumstance which emerged at the same time.

During the first search of the house, a half-burnt paper, which seemed to have been used for lighting a pipe, was found on the floor, near the press which had been broken open. Neither Madame Andrecht nor her maid smoked; the police officers had no pipes when they entered the house; so the match had in all probability been dropped on the ground by the housebreakers.

On examination of the remains of the paper, it appeared to have been a receipt, such as was usually granted by the excise to innkeepers for payment of the duties on spirits received into the town from a distance, and which served as a permit entitling the holder to put the article into his cellars. The upper part of the receipt containing the name of the party to whom it was granted was burnt, but the lower part was preserved, containing the signature of the excise officer, and the date of the permit: it was the 16th March of the same year. From these materials it was easy to ascertain what innkeeper in the town had, on that day, received such a permit for spirits. From an examination of the excise register, it appeared that on that day Nicholas D—— had received and paid the duties on several ankers of Geneva. Taken by itself, this would have afforded but slender evidence that he had been the person who had used the paper for a match, and had dropped it within Madame Andrecht's room; but, taken in connection with the

finding of the handkerchief, and the suspicious history of his nocturnal rambles which preceded it, it strenghtened in a high degree the suspicions against the ex-dragon.

After a short consultation, orders were issued for his apprehension. Surprise, it was thought, would probably extort from him an immediate confession. His wife, his father—a man advanced in years—and his brother, a shoemaker's apprentice, were apprehended at the same time.

A minute search of the house of the innkeeper followed; but none of the stolen articles were at first discovered, and indeed nothing that could excite suspicion, except a larger amount of money than might perhaps have been expected. At last, as the search was on the point of being given up, there was found in one of the drawers a memorandum-book. This was one of the articles mentioned in the list of Madame Andrecht's effects; and, on inspection, there could be no doubt that this was the one referred to—for several pages bore private markings in her own handwriting, and in a side-pocket were found two letters bearing her address. Beyond this, none of the missing articles could be traced in the house.

The persons apprehended were severally examined. Nicholas D—— answered every question with the utmost frankness and unconcern. He admitted the truth of the woolspinner's story of his

courtship, his nightly scrambles over the hedge, and his subsequent visits to his intended by means of the forage-boat. The handkerchief he admitted to be his property. When and where he had lost it he could not say. It had disappeared about six months before, and he had thought no more about it. When the pocket-book which had been found was laid before him, he gave it back without embarrassment, declared he knew nothing of it, had never had it in his possession, and shook his head with a look of surprise and incredulity when told where it had been found.

The other members of his household appeared equally unembarrassed: they expressed even greater astonishment than he had done, that the pocket-book, with which they declared themselves entirely unacquainted, should have been found in the place where it was. The young wife burst out into passionate exclamations: she protested it was impossible; or if the book was really found on the spot, that it was inexplicable to her how it came there. The Saturday before (her apprehension having taken place on a Thursday) she had brushed out the press from top to bottom—had cleared out the contents, and nothing of the kind was then to be found there.

The behaviour of the married pair and their inmates made, on the whole, a favourable impression on the judge who conducted the inquiry. Their

calmness appeared to him the result of innocence ; their character was good ; their house was orderly and quiet, and none of the articles of value had been discovered in their possession. True, they might have disposed of them elsewhere ; but the articles were numerous, and of a kind likely to lead to detection. Why should they have preserved the comparatively worthless article found in the drawer, instead of burning or destroying it ? Why, above all, preserve it in a spot so likely to be discovered, if they had so carefully made away with every trace of the rest ?

Still unquestionable suspicions rested on the landlord. The thieves must have been well acquainted with Madame Andrecht's house ; and this was undeniably his position. His handkerchief, found on the spot about the time of the robbery ; the half-burned match dropped on the premises ; the pocket-book found in his own house—these, though not amounting to proof, scarcely seemed to admit of an explanation absolutely consistent with innocence.

In this stage of the inquiry, a new witness entered upon the scene. A respectable citizen, a dealer in wood, voluntarily appeared before the authorities, and stated that his conscience would no longer allow him to conceal certain circumstances which appeared to bear upon the question, though, from an unwillingness to come forward or to appear as an informer against parties who might be in-

nocent, he had hitherto suppressed any mention of them.

Among his customers was the well-known carpenter, Isaac Van C——, who was generally considerably in arrears with his payments. These arrears increased : the wood-merchant became pressing : at last he threatened judicial proceedings. This brought matters to a point. A few days before the discovery of the robbery at Madame Andrecht's, the carpenter made his appearance in his house, and entreated him to delay proceedings, which he said would be his ruin, by bringing all his creditors on his back. "See," said he, "in what manner I am paid myself," putting a basket on the table, which contained a pair of silver candlesticks and a silver coffee-pot. "One of my debtors owes me upwards of sixty guildens : I have tried in vain to get payment, and have been glad to accept of these as the only chance of making anything of the debt. From the silversmiths here I should not get half the value for them : I must keep them by me till I go to Amsterdam, where such things are understood ; but I shall leave them with you in pledge for my debt." The wood-merchant at first declined receiving them, but at length, thinking that it was his only prospect of obtaining ultimate payment, he yielded, and the articles remained in his hands.

A few days afterwards, the robbery became pub-

lic; the list of the silver articles contained a coffee-pot and candlesticks; and the wood-merchant, not doubting that the articles pledged had formed part of the abstracted effects, had felt himself compelled to make known the way in which they had been obtained, and to place them in the hands of the officers of justice. He meant, he said, to convey no imputation against the carpenter, but it would be easy to learn from his own lips who was the debtor from whom the articles had come.

The court ordered the basket with the plate to be placed, covered, upon the table, and sent forthwith for the carpenter. He arrived in breathless haste, but seemed prepared for what followed, and without waiting for the interrogatories of the judge, he proceeded with his explanation.

Pressed by his creditor the wood-merchant, the carpenter, in his turn, proceeded to press his own debtors. Among these was the Blue Dragoon, Nicholas D——, who was indebted to him in an account of sixty guldens for work done on his premises. Nicholas entreated for delay; but the carpenter being peremptory, he inquired whether he would not take some articles of old silver plate in payment, which, he said, had belonged to his father, and had been left to him as a legacy by an old lady in whose family he had been coachman. It was at last agreed that the carpenter should take the plate at a certain value as a partial payment,

and it was accordingly brought to his house the same evening by the dragoon. The latter advised him, in the event of his wishing to dispose of the plate, to take it to Amsterdam, as the silversmiths of the place would not give him half the value for the articles. The carpenter asked him why he had not carried it to Amsterdam himself. "So I would," he answered, "if you had given me time. As it is, give me your promise not to dispose of it here—I have my own reasons for it."

If this statement was correct—and there seemed no reason to doubt the fairness of the carpenter's story—it pressed most heavily against the accused. He was thus found in possession of part of the stolen property, and disposing of it, under the most suspicious circumstances, to a third party.

He was examined anew, and the beginning of his declaration corresponded exactly with the deposition of the carpenter. The latter had worked for him: he was sixty guildens in his debt. He was asked if he had paid the account: he answered he had not been in a condition to do so. He was shown the silver plate, and was told what had been stated by the carpenter. He stammered, became pale, and protested he knew nothing of the plate; and in this statement he persisted in the presence of witnesses. He was then shown the gold which had been found in his house. It belonged, he said, not to himself, but to his father-in-law.

This part of the statement, indeed, was confirmed by the other inmates of his family ; but, in other respects, their statements were calculated to increase the suspicions against him. Nicholas, for instance, had stated that no part of his debt to Isaac had been paid—that in fact he had not been in a condition to do so—while the other three members of the household, on the contrary, maintained that a few months before he *had* made a payment of twenty guildens to Isaac, expressly to account of this claim. Nicholas became vastly embarrassed when this contradiction between his own statement and the evidence of the witnesses was pointed out to him. For the first time his composure forsook him—he begged pardon for the falsehood he had uttered. It was true, he said, that he had counted out twenty guildens, in presence of the members of his family, and told them it was intended as a payment to account of Isaac's claim ; but the money had not been paid to his creditor. He had been obliged to appropriate it to the payment of some old gambling debts, of which he could not venture to inform his wife.

This departure from truth on the part of the accused had apparently but slender bearing on the question of the robbery ; but it excited a general doubt as to his statements, which further inquiry tended to confirm. The carpenter, anxious to remove any suspicion as to the truth of his own story,

produced a sort of account-book kept by himself, in which, under the sale of 23d June, there was the following entry — “The innkeeper, Nicholas D——, has this day paid me the value of thirty guldens in old silver.” The housekeeper and apprentice of the carpenter also deponed that they had been present on one occasion when the dragoon had proposed that their master should take the silver in payment.

If, on the one hand, the innkeeper had handed over to the carpenter the silver plate, it was plain he was either the thief or the receiver: if he had not done so, the carpenter had not only been guilty of a calumnious accusation, but the suspicion of a guilty connection with the robbery became turned against himself. All presumptions, however, were against the innkeeper. He had admittedly been guilty of a decided falsehood as to the payment, —he could not or would not give the names of any one of those to whom his gambling debts had been paid, as he alleged,—and the fact that he had brought the plate to the carpenter’s was attested by three creditable witnesses.

The general opinion in the town was decidedly against him. The utmost length that any one ventured to go was, to suggest that his relations, who had been apprehended along with him, might be innocent of any participation in his guilt; though, being naturally anxious to save him, they might

somewhat have compromised the truth by their silence, or their statements.

The dragoon was removed from his provisional custody to the prison of the town ; the others were subjected to a close surveillance, that all communication between them might be prevented. As all of them, however, persisted in the story, exactly as it had at first been told, stronger measures were at length resorted to. On the motion of the burgomaster, as public prosecutor, "that the principal party accused, Nicholas D——, should be delivered over to undergo the usual preparatory process for compelling confession," namely, the torture, the court, after consideration of the state of the evidence, unanimously issued the usual warrant against him to that effect. Some pitied him, though none doubted his guilt. The general impression in the town was, that the courage of the innkeeper would soon give way, and that, in fact, he would probably confess the whole upon the first application of the torture.

The preparations were complete—the torture was to take place the next day, when the following letter, bearing the post-mark of Rotterdam, was received by the court :—

"Before I leave the country, and betake myself where I shall be beyond the reach either of the court of M—— or the military tribunal of the garrison, I would save the poor unfortunate persons

who are now prisoners at M——. Beware of punishing the innkeeper, his wife, his father, and brother, for a crime of which they are not guilty. How the story of the carpenter is connected with theirs I cannot conjecture. I have heard of it with the greatest surprise. The latter may not himself be entirely innocent. Let the judge pay attention to this remark. You may spare yourselves the trouble of inquiring after me. If the wind is favourable, by the time you read this letter I shall be on my passage to England.

“JOSEPH CHRISTIAN RUHLER,
“Former Corporal in the Company of Le Lery.”

The court gladly availed themselves of the opportunity afforded by this letter to put off the torture. At first sight it did not appear a mere device to obtain delay. A company under Captain Le Lery was in garrison in the town; in that company there was a corporal of the name of Ruhler, who some weeks before had deserted and disappeared from his quarters. All inquiries after him since had proved in vain. The court subsequently learned from the report of the officer in command, that he had disappeared the evening before the day when the news of the robbery became public. He had been last seen by the guard in the course of the forenoon before his disappearance. Some connection between the events appeared extremely probable.

But a new discovery seemed suddenly to demolish the conclusions founded on the letter. It had been laid before the commanding officer, who at once declared the handwriting was counterfeited; it was not that of Ruhler, which was well known, nor had it the least resemblance to it. The evidence of several of his comrades, and a comparison of the handwriting with some regimental lists, undoubtedly in the handwriting of Ruhler, proved this beyond a doubt.

The letter from Rotterdam thus was merely the device of some unknown friend or confederate, and probably resorted to only to put off the punishment of the accused. How indeed, if Ruhler was really implicated in the robbery, should he have thus cast suspicion upon himself? If his object had been merely to preserve the innkeeper and his friends from the torture, he would have assumed some other name. In all probability, therefore, some third party, implicated in the robbery, had availed himself of the accidental disappearance of the corporal to throw the suspicion of the robbery upon him, and to exculpate the guilty parties, who, if brought to the torture, might be induced to disclose the names of all their associates. To prevent this was probably the object of the letter. This, at least, was the prevailing opinion.

The strongest efforts were now made to discover the true writer of the letter; and mean time the

torture was put off, when two other important witnesses made their appearance on the stage. Neither had the least connection with the other; nay, the circumstances which they narrated appeared in some respects contradictory, and while they threw light on the subject in one quarter, they only served to darken it in another.

A merchant in the town, who dealt in different wares, and lived in the neighbourhood of Madame Andrecht's house, had been absent on a journey of business during the discovery of the robbery, and the course of the subsequent judicial proceedings. Scarcely had he returned and heard the story of the robbery, when he voluntarily presented himself next morning before the authorities, for the purpose, as he said, of making important revelations, which might have the effect of averting destruction from the innocent. In the public coach he had already heard some particulars of the case, and had formed his own conjectures; but since his return, these conjectures had with him grown into convictions, and he had not closed an eye from the apprehension that his disclosures might come too late. Had he returned sooner, matters would never have reached this length.

At the time when the robbery must have taken place, he had been in the town. The carpenter, Isaac Van C——, called upon him one day, begging the loan of the boat, which he was in the custom

of using for the transport of bales and heavy packages to different quarters of the town. The boat generally lay behind the merchant's house, close to his warehouse, which was situated on the bank of the town fosse already alluded to. Isaac assured him he would require the boat only for a night or two, and would take care that it was returned in the morning in good condition. To the question why he wanted the boat at night, he, after some hesitation, returned for answer, that he had engaged to transport the furniture of some people who were removing, and who had their own reasons for not doing so in daylight, implying that they were taking French leave of their creditors. "And you propose to lend yourself to such a transaction," said the merchant, peremptorily refusing the loan of the boat. The carpenter interrupted him: assured him he had only jested; that his real object was only to amuse himself in fishing with some of his comrades; and that he had only not stated that at first, as the merchant might be apprehensive that the operation would dirty his boat. The merchant at last yielded to the continued requests of the carpenter, and agreed to lend him the boat, but upon the express condition that it should be returned to its place in the morning. In this respect the carpenter kept his word; when the merchant went to his warehouse in the morning, he saw the carpenter and his apprentice engaged

in fastening the boat. They went away without observing him. It struck him, however, as singular, that they appeared to have with them neither nets nor fishing-tackle of any kind. He examined the boat, and was surprised to find it perfectly clean and dry ; whereas, if used for fishing, it would probably have been found half-filled with water, and dirty enough. In this particular, then, the carpenter had been detected in an untruth. The boat had not been fastened to its usual place ; the merchant jumped into it for that purpose, and from a crevice in the side he saw something protruding ; he took it out ; it was a couple of silver forks wrapped in paper. Thus the carpenter's first version of the story—as to the purpose for which he wanted the boat—was the true one after all. He *had* been assisting some bankrupt to carry off his effects. . Angry at having been thus deceived, the merchant put the forks in his pocket, and set out forthwith on his way to Isaac's. The carpenter, his apprentice, and his housekeeper, were in the workshop. He produced the forks. "These," said he, "are what you have left in my boat. Did you use these to eat your fish with?"

The three were visibly embarrassed. They cast stolen glances upon one another ; no one ventured to speak. The housekeeper first recovered her composure. She stammered out,—“that he must not think ill of them ; that her master had only

been assisting some people who were leaving the town quietly, to remove their furniture and effects." As the transaction was unquestionably not of the most creditable character, this might account for the visible embarrassment they betrayed; when he demanded, however, the names of the parties whose effects they had been removing, no answer was forthcoming. The carpenter at last told him he was not at liberty to disclose them then, but that he should learn them afterwards. All three pressingly entreated him to be silent as to this matter. He was so; but in the meantime made inquiry quietly as to who had left the town, though without success. Shortly after, his journey took place, and the transaction had worn out of mind, till recalled to his recollection on his return, when he was made aware of the whole history of the robbery; and forthwith came to the conclusion, that there lay at the bottom of the matter some shameful plot to implicate the innocent, and to shield those whom he believed to be the true criminals,—namely, Isaac Van C——, his apprentice, and housekeeper, the leading witnesses, in fact, against the unfortunate dragoon.

The criminal proceedings, in consequence of these disclosures, took a completely different turn. The merchant was a witness entirely above suspicion. True, there was here only the testimony of one witness, either to the innocence of the dra-

goon, or the guilt of the carpenter ; but the moral conviction to which his statement gave rise in the mind of the judge was so strong, that he did not hesitate to issue an immediate order for the arrest of the carpenter and his companions, before publicity should be given to the merchant's disclosures. No sooner were they apprehended, than a strict scrutiny was made in the carpenter's house.

This measure was attended with the most complete success. With the exception of a few trifles, the whole of the effects which had been abstracted from Madame Andrecht's were found in the house. The examination of the prisoners produced a very different result from those of Nicholas and his comrades. True, they denied the charges, but they did so with palpable confusion, and their statements abounded in the grossest contradictions of each other, and even of themselves. They came to recriminations and mutual accusations ; and being threatened with the torture, they at last offered to make a full confession. The substance of their admissions was as follows :—

Isaac Van C——, his apprentice, and his house-keeper, were the real perpetrators of the robbery at Madame Andrecht's. Who had first suggested to them the design does not appear from the evidence. But with the old lady's house and its arrangements they were as fully acquainted as the dragoon. The apprentice, when formerly in the service of another

master, had wrought in it, and knew every corner of it thoroughly. They had borrowed the boat for the purpose of getting access across the canal into the garden, and used it for carrying off the stolen property, as already mentioned. On the morning when the robbery became public, the master and the apprentice had mingled with the crowd to learn what reports were in circulation on the subject. Among other things, the apprentice had heard that the woolspinner's wife had unhesitatingly expressed her suspicions against the Blue Dragoon. Of this he informed his comrades, and they, delighted at finding so convenient a scapegoat for averting danger from themselves, forthwith formed the infernal design of directing, by every means in their power, the suspicions of justice against the innkeeper.

The apprentice entered the drinking-room of the innkeeper, and called for some schnaps, at the same time asking for a coal to light his pipe. While the innkeeper went out to fetch the coal, the apprentice took the opportunity of slipping the widow's memorandum-book, which he had brought in his pocket, betwixt the drawers. He succeeded, and the consequences followed as the culprits had foreseen: the house was searched, the book found, and, in the eyes of many, the dragoon's guilt established.

If these confessions were to be trusted, the dragoon and his family seemed exculpated from

any actual participation in the robbery. Still there were circumstances which these confessions did not clear up; some grave points of doubt remained unexplained. That the carpenter had himself pledged the silver plate with the wood-merchant, without having received it from Nicholas, was now likely enough; he had accused him, probably, only to screen himself. But how came Nicholas's handkerchief to be found by the side of the hedge? How came the excise receipt, which belonged to him, to be used as a match by the thieves? The carpenter and his comrades declared that as to these facts they knew nothing; and as they had now no inducement to conceal the truth, there could be no reasonable doubt that their statement might, in these particulars, be depended upon.

The suspicion again arose that other accomplices must be concerned in the affair; and the subject of the letter from the corporal who had deserted became anew the subject of attention. If not written by himself, it might have been written by another at his suggestion, and in one way or other it might have a connection with the mysterious subject of the robbery.

In fact, while the proceedings against the carpenter and his associates were in progress, an incident had occurred, which could not fail to awaken curiosity and attention with regard to this letter. The schoolmaster of a village about a

league from the town presented himself before the authorities, exhibited a scrap of paper on which nothing appeared but the name Joseph Christian Ruhler, and inquired whether, shortly before, a letter in this handwriting and subscribed with this name had not been transmitted to the court? On comparing the handwriting of the letter with the paper exhibited by the schoolmaster, it was unquestionable that both were the production of the same hand.

The statement of the schoolmaster was this :—

In the village where he resided, there was a deaf and dumb young man, named Henry Hechting, who had been sent by the parish to the schoolmaster for board and education. He had succeeded in imparting to the unfortunate youth the art of writing ; so perfectly, indeed, that he could communicate with any one by means of a slate and slate-pencil which he always carried about with him. He also wrote so fair a hand, that he was employed by many persons, and even sometimes by the authorities, to transcribe or copy writings for them. Some time before, an unknown person had appeared in the village, had inquired after the deaf and dumb young man in the schoolmaster's absence, and had taken him with him to the alehouse to write out something for him. The unknown had called for a private room, ordered a bottle of wine, and, by means of the slate, gave him to understand that he wanted

him to make a clean copy of the draft of a letter which he produced. Hechting did so at once without suspicion. Still, the contents of the letter appeared to him of a peculiar and questionable kind, and the whole demeanour of the stranger evinced restlessness and anxiety. When he came, however, to add the address of the letter, "To Herr Van der R——, Burgomaster of M——," he hesitated to do so, and yielded only to the pressing entreaties of the stranger, who paid him a gulden for his trouble, requesting him to preserve strict silence as to the whole affair.

The deaf and dumb young man, when he began to reflect on the matter, felt more and more convinced that he had unconsciously been made a party to some illegal transaction. He at last confessed the whole to his instructor, who at once perceived that there existed a close connection between the incident which had occurred and the criminal procedure in the noted case of the robbery. The letter of the corporal had already got into circulation in the neighbourhood, and was plainly the one which his pupil had been employed to copy. The school-master, at his own hand, set on foot a small preliminary inquiry. He hastened to the innkeeper of the village inn, and asked him if he could recollect the stranger who some days before had ordered a private room and a bottle of wine, and who had been for some time shut up with the deaf and dumb lad.

The host remembered the circumstance, but did not know the man. His wife, however, recollected that she had seen him talking on terms of cordial familiarity with the corn-miller, Overblink, as he was resting at the inn with his carts. The schoolmaster repaired on the spot to Overblink, inquired who was the man with whom he had conversed and shaken hands some days before at the inn; and the miller, without much hesitation, answered, that he remembered the day, the circumstance, and the man, very well; and that the latter was his old acquaintance the baker, H——, from the town. The schoolmaster hastened to lay these particulars before the authorities.

How, then, was the well-known baker, H——, implicated in this affair, which seemed gradually to be expanding itself so strangely? The facts as to the robbery itself seemed exhausted by the confessions of the carpenter and his associates. They alone had broken into the house—they alone had carried off and appropriated the stolen articles. And yet, if the baker was entirely unconnected with the matter, what could be his motive for mixing himself up with the transaction, and writing letters, as if to avert suspicion from those who had been first accused? Was his motive simply compassion? Was he aware of the real circumstances of the crime, and its true perpetrators? Did he know that the Blue Dragoon was innocent? But

if so, why employ this mysterious and circuitous mode of assisting him? Why resort to this anxious precaution of employing a deaf and dumb lad as his amanuensis? why such signs of restlessness and apprehension,—such anxious injunctions of silence? Plainly the baker was not entirely innocent: this was the conviction left on the minds of the judges; for it was now recollected that this baker was the same person who, on the morning when the robbery was detected, had contrived to make his way into the house along with the officers of justice. It was he who had lifted from the ground the match containing the half-burnt receipt, and handed it to the officers present. His excessive zeal had even attracted attention before. Had he, then, broken into the house independently of the carpenter? Had he, too, committed a robbery—and was he agitated by the fear of its detection? But all the stolen articles had been recovered, and all of them had been found with the carpenter. The mystery, for the moment, seemed only increased; but it was about to be cleared up in a way wonderful enough, but entirely satisfactory.

While the schoolmaster and the miller Overblink were detained at the Council-Chamber, the baker H—— was taken into custody. A long and circumstantial confession was the result, to the particulars of which we shall immediately advert. From his disclosures, a warrant was also issued for the

apprehension of the woolspinner, Leendert Van N—— and his wife—the same who had at first circulated the reports and suspicions against the dragoon, and who had afterwards given such plausible, and, as it appeared, such frank and sincere information against him before the court. Both had taken the opportunity of making off: but the pursuit of justice was successful—before evening they were brought back and committed to prison.

The criminal procedure now proceeded rapidly to a close, but it related to a quite different matter from the robbery. This third association of culprits, it appeared, had as little to do with the carpenter and his comrades as these had with the dragoon and his inmates. But for the housebreaking, in which the persons last arrested had no share, the real crime in which they were concerned would, in all human probability, never have seen the light.

The following disclosures were the result of the confessions of the guilty, and of the other witnesses who were examined.

On the evening of the 29th June, there were assembled in the low and dirty chamber of the woolspinner, Leendert Van N——, a party of card-players. It has already been mentioned that this quarter of the town was in a great measure inhabited by the disreputable portion of the public

—only a few houses, like those of Madame Andrecht, being occupied by the better classes. The gamblers were the Corporal Ruhler, of the company of Le Lery, then lying in garrison in the place, the master-baker H——, and the host himself, Leendert Van N——. The party were old acquaintances; they hated and despised each other, but a community of interests and pursuits drew them together.

The baker and corporal had been long acquainted; the former baked the bread for the garrison company, the latter had the charge of receiving it from him. The corporal had soon detected various frauds committed by the baker, and gave the baker the choice of denouncing them to the commanding officer, or sharing with him the profits of the fraud. The baker naturally chose the latter, but hated the corporal as much as he feared him; while the latter made him continually feel how completely he considered him in his power.

A still deadlier enmity existed between the corporal and the woolspinner and his wife. The latter had formerly supplied the garrison with gaiters and other articles of clothing, and he had reason to believe that the corporal had been the means of depriving him of this commission, by which he had suffered materially. But the corporal had still a good deal in his power; he might be the means

of procuring other orders, and it was necessary, therefore, to suppress any appearance of irritation, and even to appear to court his favour.

Such an association as that which subsisted among these comrades, where each hates and suspects the other, and nothing but the tie of a common interest unites them, can never be of long duration. The moment is sure to arrive when the spark falls upon the mine which has been so long prepared, and the explosion takes place, the more fearful the longer it has been delayed.

These worthy associates were playing cards on the evening above-mentioned: they quarrelled; and the quarrel became more and more embittered. The long-suppressed hatred on the part of the baker and the woolspinner burst forth. The corporal retorted in terms equally offensive; he applied to them the epithets which they deserved. From words they proceeded to blows, and deadly weapons were laid hold of on both sides. But two male foes and a female fury, arrayed on one side, were too much even for a soldier. The corporal, seized and pinioned from behind by the woman, fell under the blows of the woolspinner. As yet the baker had rather hounded on the others than actually interfered in the scuffle; but when the corporal, stretched on the ground, and his head bleeding from a blow on the corner of the table, which he had received in falling, began to utter

loud curses against them, and to threaten them all with public exposure—particularly that deceitful scoundrel the baker—the latter, prompted either by fear or hatred, whispered to the woolspinner and his wife that now was the time to make an end of him at once; and that if they did not, they were ruined.

The deadly counsel was adopted: they fell upon the corporal; with a few blows life was extinct; the corpse, swimming in blood, lay at their feet. The deed was irrevocable; all three had shared in it; all were alike guilty, and had the same reason to tremble at the terrors of the law. With the body still warm at their feet, they entered into a solemn mutual engagement to be true to each other; to preserve inviolable secrecy as to the crime; and to extinguish, so far as in them lay, every trace of its commission.

On the night of the murder, they had devised no plan for washing out the blood and removing the body, which of course required to be disposed of, so that the disappearance of Ruhler might cause no suspicion. The terrors of conscience, and the apprehension of the consequences of their crime, had too completely occupied their minds for the moment. The next morning, however, they met again at the woolspinner's house to arrange their plans. Suddenly a noise was heard in the street,—it was the commotion caused by the news of the

discovery of the robbery at Madame Andrecht's. The culprits stood pale and confounded. What was more probable than that an immediate search in pursuit of the robbers, or of the stolen articles, would take place into every house of this suspected and disreputable quarter. The woolspinner's house was the next to that which had been robbed; the flooring was at that moment wet with blood; the body of the murdered corporal lay in the cellar. Immediate measures must be resorted to, to stop the apprehended search, till time could be found for removing the body.

The object, then, was to give to the authorities such hints as should induce them to pass over the houses of the baker and the woolspinner. The woolspinner's wife had the merit of devising the infernal project which occurred to them. The Blue Dragoon was to be the victim. A robbery had taken place. Why might he not have been the criminal? He had often scaled the hedge—had often entered the house at night during his courtship. But then a corroborating circumstance might be required to ground the suspicion. It was supplied by the possession of a handkerchief which he had accidentally dropped in her house, and which she had not thought it necessary to restore to him. It might be placed in any spot they thought fit, and the first links in the chain of suspicion were clear.

The invention of the baker came to the aid of the

woolspinner's wife. One token was not enough ; a second proof of the presence of the dragoon in Madame Andrecht's house must be devised. The baker had, one day, been concluding a bargain with a peasant before the house of the dragoon. He required a bit of paper to make some calculation, and asked the host for some, who handed him an old excise permit, telling him to make his calculations on the back. This scrap of paper the baker still had in his pocket-book. This would undoubtedly compromise the dragoon. But then it bore the name and handwriting of the baker on the back. This portion of it was accordingly burnt ; the date and the signature of the excise officer were enough for the diabolical purpose it was intended to effect. It was rolled up into a match, and deposited by the baker (who, as already said, had contrived to make his way along with the police into the house) upon the floor, where he pretended to find it, and deliver it to the authorities.

The machinations of these wretches were unconsciously assisted by those of the carpenter and his confederates. The suspicion which the handkerchief and the match had originated, the finding of the pocket-book within the house of the dragoon appeared to confirm and complete,—an accidental concurrence of two independent plots, both resorted to from the principle of self-preservation, and having in view the same infernal object.

But this object, so far as concerned the baker and the woolspinner, had been too effectually attained. They had wished to excite suspicion against Nicholas, only with the view of gaining time to remove the corpse and efface the traces of the murder. This had been effected—their intrigue had served its purpose; and they could not but feel some remorse at the idea that an innocent person should be thereby brought to ruin. The strange intervention of chance—the finding of the pocket-book, the accusation by the carpenter, filled them with a secret terror; they trembled: their consciences again awoke. The thought of the torture, which awaited the unfortunate innkeeper, struck them with horror. It was not the ordinary fear of guilty men, afraid of the disclosures of an accomplice—for the dragoon knew nothing, he could say nothing to compromise them,—it was a feeling implanted by a Divine power, which seemed irresistibly to impel them to use their endeavours to avert his fate.

They met, they consulted as to their plans. A scheme occurred to them which promised to serve a double purpose,—by which delay might be obtained for Nicholas, while at the same time it might be made the means of permanently insuring their own safety. To resuscitate the murdered Corporal Ruhler in another quarter, and to charge him with the guilt of the robbery, might serve both ends. It gave a chance of escape to Nicholas: it accounted for the

disappearance of the corporal. Hence the letter which represented him as alive, as the perpetrator of the robbery, and as a deserter flying to another country ; which they thought would very naturally put a stop to all further inquiry after him.

But their plan was too finely spun, and the very precautions to which they had resorted, led, as sometimes happens, to discovery. If they had been satisfied to allow the proposed letter to be copied out by the woolspinner's wife, as she offered, to be taken by her to Rotterdam, and put into the post, suspicion could hardly have been awakened against them : the handwriting of the woman, who had seldom occasion to use the pen, would have been unknown to the burgomaster or the court. The deaf and dumb youth, to whom they resorted as their copyist, betrayed them : step by step they were traced out,—and between fear and hope, a full confession was at last extorted from them.

Sentence of death was pronounced against the parties who had been concerned in the housebreaking as well as in the murder, and carried into effect against all of them, with the exception of the woolspinner's wife, who died during her imprisonment. The woolspinner alone exhibited any signs of penitence.

LORD HATTON:

A TALE OF CASTLE CORNET IN GUERNSEY.

BY THE EARL OF WINCHILSEA.

[MAGA. APRIL 1873.]

FYTTE THE FIRST.

1

“KIT HATTON! Kit Hatton!
I rede ye beware
Of the flash from the cloud,
And the flight through the air!
When the star of thy destiny
Looms in the sky,
To others unclouded, but
Red to thine eye,
Tho’ men see no signs in
The threat’ning air—
Kit Hatton! Kit Hatton!
I rede ye beware!”

2

Thus spoke the weird woman
On Rockinghamshire,¹
As homeward benighted
Thro' moss and thro' mire
On an errand concerning
The King and the State,
In the days of "Old Noll"
The good youngster rode late.
For the sun of the Cavaliers
Lately had set
In a red pool of blood
Not atoned for as yet.

3

Since neither had "Peters"²
Improv'd his last text,
Nor the "Angel of vengeance"
The Judges annex,

¹ The great plain of Rockingham Forest, 700 acres in extent, of which Lord Hatton of Kirby (father of the Lord Hatton the subject of this ballad) was Ranger. Both father and son were Governors in succession of the Channel Islands.

² Cromwell's chaplain and son-in-law, tried with twenty-eight other regicides at the Old Bailey, Oct. 10, 1660. It came out in evidence from Sir Jeremy Whicheot that Peters said at the King's trial, "I cannot but look upon this Court with great reverence, for it doth resemble in some measure the trials which shall be at the end of the world by the saints." Also he preached on 20th of Jan. 1648, before Cromwell and Bradshaw, on the text, "Bind

Nor "the Rump" had been cook'd
 At renown'd Temple Bar,
 Nor the "Watch-dogs of Judah"
 Been scattered afar;
 Nor old "Nolly Rednose"¹
 In lightning and thunder,
 And a storm that shook England itself
 Had gone under.

4

"Aroint thee, false witch!"
 Then the Cavalier said;

your kings in chains and your nobles in fetters of iron," and observed the next psalm had twelve hallelujahs to express their joy that "kings were bound in chains."

¹ The Cavaliers were never tired of turning "Old Noll" and his nose into ridicule. "A New Year's Gift for the Rump," Jan. 5, 1659-60, has in the third verse—

"The right was then in old Oliver's nose;
 And when the Devil of that did dispose,
 It descended from thence to the Rump in the close,
 Which nobody can deny."

And in "The Cities Welcome to Colonel Rich and Colonel Baxter," 7th verse:—

"Oliver, we thee prefer
 To guide these boys unto us.
 Thou art the King of our new State,
 And worthy to undo us.
 Thy nose and fiery face
 Speak thee a babe of grace,
 And most regenerate
 As sack did e'er create."

“ By the soul of this kingdom
That lacketh a head,
The green of old Gretton ¹
To-morrow shall see
How we deal in this Forest
With prophets like thee !
For the stake and the fagot
Of green-wood prepare ! ”
“ Kit Hatton ! Kit Hatton !
I rede ye beware ! ”

5

Next morning full early
They sought for the witch,
But found nothing forsooth,
Save an old mastiff bitch
With no tooth in her head
And no hair on her flank,—
Lying dead in a ditch
Among nettles so rank :
Yet mysterious and strange
To his soul as they were,
The words never left him—
“ Kit Hatton, beware ! ”

¹ Gretton is a large and formerly lawless parish of five thousand acres, most part of which lay in Rockingham Forest. Christopher, afterwards second Lord and first Viscount Hatton, is supposed to be riding across Rockingham Forest to his father's princely house of Kirby, built from the designs of John Thorp,

6

With many a noble
The Roundheads had reckoned,
When in came the days
Of King Charlie the Second ;
A jolly good fellow who
Was not inclined
To pay off the debts
Of his father in kind.
So to set off the mortgage
That swamped his broad lands,
He made Hatton Chief
Of the Channel Islands.

7

And there many seasons
Both early and late,
In good Castle Cornet¹
He governed the State.
The French knew him well
And the "Islanders" too,
'Twas little he recked
Of their "Cri de Haro."²

by Sir Christopher Hatton, Chancellor to Queen Elizabeth. It is perhaps the finest of the five houses known to be built by that great architect.

¹ This fortress is placed on a rock defending the entrance to the port of St Pierre, the principal town in the island of Guernsey.

² The Channel Islands belong to the Crown of England as part

In armour he dwelt,
Not in cotton or flannel ;
And he kept a good guard
O'er the "Chops of the Channel."

8

It chanced that one evening
Lord Hatton was set
In friendly discourse
With one Ensign Covett ;
For supper was over,
And most were a-bed,
And clear were the night
And the stars overhead ;
But yet there loomed one
In the threat'ning air,
That said to Lord Hatton
"I rede ye beware !"

9

Then quoth the good Lord—
"Pray to Heaven that we

of the Duchy of Normandy. The "Cri de Haro" is a legacy from those times, and is still part of the law of the land.

By raising this cry,—"*Haro ! Haro ! on me fait tort !*" it is competent to any suitor who considers himself aggrieved to put a summary stop (for the time being) to all proceedings in the courts of law of the islands. It was employed only the other day to check the proceedings of a railway company.

The dawn of to-morrow
In safety may see !
Full angry it looks——"
But to all other eye
Seemed the moon never brighter
Or clearer the sky.
The bell tolls eleven,—
They separate all—
And the sentinel's tramp
Is alone on the wall !

FYTTE THE SECOND.

10

'Twas the dawn of the New¹ Year !
With shake and with shock
To its base Castle Cornet
Did shiver and rock !
And down came the bastions,
And down came the towers,
The ramparts and houses,
And fair ladies' bowers ;
And James Chapple, the Negro,
In terror awoke,
And thus to his mate
In the darkness he spoke :

¹ The castle was blown up within an hour of the commencement of the year 1673.

11

“I hear my Lord’s voice !
’Tis for help that he calls,
Up yonder—somewhere
On our outermost walls.”
So at last he brake forth,
And in darkness and dread
Made his way to the voice,
And behold in his bed,
On the parapet’s edge
That o’erhung the deep sea,
With the coverlid o’er him,
His master found he.

12

Then quoth good Lord Hatton
Aloft in the air :
“Seek My Lady and children,
And see how they fare !”
For apart from his lodgings
In childbed she lay,
With none to bring help
On that terrible day.
From the womb of the cloud
Came in lightning the fire ;
And the witch had told truth
Upon Rockinghamshire.

13

Then James Chapple, the Negro,
So proper and tall,
On his hands and his knees
Brought his Lord off the wall,
Safe into the guard-room,
Free from danger and harm ;
For the garrison now
Had got up in alarm,
And candles were lighted,
And next they prepare
To dig in the ruins—
They hardly knew where.

14

Then the Dowager Lady
Was found in her bed ;
She lay there a corpse,
With a stone on her head.
And in the next room,
When they broke the partition,
They found her two daughters
In dying condition ;
But both were alive—
For in bed as they were,
A beam fell betwixt 'em
And severed the pair.

15

So they carried them down
In great joy to their chief,
Where he sat in the guard-room
In silence and grief.
And guided by Chapple,
Again returned they,
To where the poor lady
His Baroness lay.
Then the Negro bethought him
He heard something greet,
Deep down in the ruins, just
Under his feet.

16

And quoth he to the Captain :
“ Dig quickly and see !
Perhaps 'tis My Lady !
For here she should be.”
So they worked with a will,
And in feet barely two,
They struck on a beam
That had fallen askew,
And beneath it a hollow,
Where, strange to behold,
Lay asleep and uninjured
A child three years old !

17

Anne Hatton, the governor's daughter,
The same
That Nottingham's countess
Hereafter became ;
And lived many years
In much honour and state,
And bore to her lord many sons,
And died late.
So they carried her down
To her father with care,
As, bewildered, he mused
On his flight through the air.

18

And again they returned,
When they found her in bed,
One more of the nurses,
But she was stone dead.
Yet dead as she was,
In her arms she held up
An infant at play
With a small silver cup.
And yet they searched on,
And removing some more
Of the rubbish and boards
That encumbered the floor,

19

Found alive in her cradle,
The lamb of the fold,
Elizabeth Hatton, a child
Three weeks old ;
So they carried her down to
Her father, and then
They dug further down
In the ruins again,
And two or three women
Alive took out they ;
But the rest were all dead,
With their bones broke, they say.

20

And at last on her knees,
With her wrapping-gown on,
They found the poor lady,¹
But she, too, was gone ;

¹ The Lady Cecilia Tufton, daughter of John, Earl of Thanet, and the Lady Anne Clifford (sole daughter and heiress of the great family of the Cliffords, Earls of Cumberland, and Baroness Clifford in her own right), was the first wife of Christopher, second Lord Hatton, who was created in 1682, by Charles the Second, Viscount Hatton of Gretton, in reward for his eminent services. William, his son by his third wife, Elizabeth, daughter and co-heir of Sir William Hazlewood of Maidwell, Northants, dying unmarried in 1762, the title became extinct, and the estates passed by devise to Edward Finch, sixth son of Anne, Countess of Nottingham (the child who was saved by the beam falling across her cradle), who thereupon

And by her her maid,
In a similar plight,
For neither 'scaped
On that perilous night ;
From the womb of the cloud
Came in lightning the fire ;
And the witch had told truth
Upon Rockinghamshire.

21

And a week after this,
When the search was all done,
Came the best of the island,
Full many a one,
To condole with his lordship,
And proffer relief,
If so be that kind phrases
Might solace his grief ;

assumed the name and arms of Hatton,—Azure, three garbs or, between a chevron of the last—in addition to his paternal coat of Finch ; and it was his grandson George William that succeeded to the titles of Winchilsea and Nottingham, upon the death of his cousin George, the ninth Earl, but not to the estates, which were all willed away elsewhere. John, fifth Earl of Winchilsea, dying without issue, September 9, 1729, the title of Winchilsea devolved on Daniel, second Earl of Nottingham, son of the great Chancellor. He had for his second wife Anne, daughter of Christopher Viscount Hatton, the child of three years old that was dug out of the ruins of Castle Cornet—and by her, says Collins, he was the father of five sons and eight daughters, besides ten other children who died young, and seven who were still-born ;—thirty in all : a pretty large family for a lady who had been buried alive for twelve hours, and a proof that she took no harm by the accident.

And they asked him perchance
 " If he knew how it fared ? "
Upon which in their hearing
Lord Hatton declared—

22

" That he never once slept
 Though he lay in his bed,
And first at a distance,
 And then overhead
Came nearer the thunder—
 The wind growing high,
And the hail beating sharp
 On the windows hard by ;
'Then he felt underneath him
 The bed to move first,
And immediately hearing
 A marvellous burst,

23

" Found himself in the air
 And in perilous case,
For he knew that the lightning
 Had blown up the place ;
Since of powder there lay
 'Neath the castle in store,
Two hundred and fifty
 Good barrels, or more.

But shocked and bewildered
He was not aware
That out of the house he'd
Been carried, or where !

24

"Till raising himself by
The feverish light
Of some very large flashes
That fathomed the night ;
On one side the yard
Of the castle found he,
And yawning on t'other
The depths of the sea.
So he dared not to stir,
Lest perchance he should fall
On this side or that, from
His place on the wall !"

25

And in guerdon of this
His most opportune deed,
With twenty¹ pounds yearly
James Chapple was fee'd.

¹ This is by no means the paltry sum it appears, but a very handsome pension. Beef and mutton, as shown by Lord Hatton's household account-books, were then but a penny a pound, and other things in proportion.

Twenty pounds then will represent some two hundred or two hundred and fifty pounds per annum now ; which is a handsome

And he lived long in Gretton
With nothing to do,
And deposed to this statement
When past eighty-two ;
Laid by and forgotten
In days long since past,
Till the Heir of the Hattons
Revives it at last.

26

Now of good Castle Cornet
I've told you the tale,
Of the witch, and the warning,
The thunder and hail ;
Of the flash from the cloud,
And the flight through the air—
And the red star that bade
The Lord Hatton beware.
And I presently challenge
The scribes of this nation
To furnish in fiction
A stranger narration.

27

There's a moral beside—
Had this beam fallen flat,

remuneration even for the signal services rendered by the negro,
and probably more than he would get now.

Or Miss Anne not possessed
One more life than a cat ;
Then I that have fashioned
This marvellous lay
Of the gallant Lord Hatton
Had never seen day ;
And the public had lost
Some amusement and wit ;
And as rattling a ballad
As ever was writ !

August 21, 1872.

NOTICE.

I recollect to have seen the original deposition somewhere about the year '25, in the commencement of the present century, but it has since been lost. Happily a copy of it (of the existence of which I was not aware) was taken by the Hon. and Rev. Daniel Heneage Finch Hatton, Rector of Great and Little Weldon, in the county of Northants.

This came to my knowledge as late as 1872, after I had long given up all hopes of recovering the original—a most curious document—and probably stolen by some one who did not know its value.

From this copy I take the text as it stands, *verbatim et literatim*.

Copy.

An account of the lightning that blew up the Castle Guernsey in 16—, when the Right Hon^{ble} Christopher Lord Hatton was Governor there, given by James Chapple of Gretton in the County of Northampton, a Negro who was at that time servant to the said Lord Hatton at Guernsey, and himself tooke the said Lord off the Castle wall, in cause whereof that Noble Lord left him an annuity of twenty pounds sterling, during his life.

“Saith that he is about eighty-two years of age, and that in the year 16— (he was servant to the said Lord Hatton as he had been from Nov^r 1663), on the thirty-first of December he the said Lord Hatton after supper went and sett with one Ensign Covett¹ (who is an officer

¹ Dicey in his account of the catastrophe calls this gentleman Ensign Covert, and mentions that which the negro has omitted—viz., that he (Ensign C.) was killed in the blowing up of the Castle. Dicey also states that the Castle was blown up on Sunday the 29th of December 1672, or rather in the morning of the 30th (by his own showing), for he says it was past twelve o'clock at night; but he is no doubt wrong. It is pretty clear by comparing the two accounts that Dicey's was substantially taken from the negro's, but with many inaccuracies.

Dicey says—“Lord Hatton was taken off the wall by ‘two black servants.’” Now this is clearly a blunder; for not only was it unlikely that Lord Hatton should have two black servants in his establishment, but it sufficiently appears that he pensioned but one; whereas if both had been engaged in his rescue he would hardly have left out one of them.

As this deposition was taken down from James Chapple's own mouth, fifty-four years afterwards, when he was eighty-two years of age, it is not surprising that the narrator should have forgotten the year, which is accordingly left blank; but excepting in this particular his story is both graphic and precise, and appears to be

at that time in garrison there and an acquaintance of the said Lord), till about eleven o'clock at night, when the said Lord Hatton returned to his own apartment in the Castle and this informant with him, and Mr Covett looking up to the skye, said to my Lord Hatton 'Pray observe that starr;' and his Lordship looking earnestly at it said—'It looks very angry; I wish we have not some foul weather:' but to this informant's judgment he never saw a clearer skye; and the moon was just setting, and when this informant had putt his said Lord to bed, he went to his own room, and was in bed himself by twelve; and by one in the morning, which was New-Year's day, this informant was wak'd by another servant of the said Lord (who laid with this informant, and had been in bed some time before him), and was by him told he did believe the house was falling and then they both got up, and it being very darke, they were some time before they could find the door; but at last they gott out, and the first thing this informant then heard was his Lord's voice calling for help: and being directed by the voice, this informant at last found he was on the castle wall, and was by his Lordship order'd to go and see for his wife and children, and bring him word how they did (for his lady being at that time lying in was lodg'd in a separate part of the house from his Lordship);

in every respect worthy of belief. Dicey had evidently heard of the negro's story but not seen the narrative, and his account is full of blunders.

Among others, and it is perhaps the most unpardonable, for it shows the most reckless carelessness of assertion, he says that "Anne, Countess of Nottingham, was one of the two sisters of Lord Hatton that were rescued by the breaking down of the partition wall;" whereas it is beyond doubt that she was the eldest daughter of Christopher, second Lord Hatton, by his first wife, Lady Cecilia Tufton.

but it being very darke as aforesaid, and having no shoes on, nor anything but his shirt, he inform'd his Lordship that he could not gett to that part of the house, nor indeed so much as back again to his own apartment, he having come thro' a window of the Gard-roome to come to the Castle wall to his Lordship ; and then this informant, borrowing a pair of shoes from the soldiers, with some difficulty gott on the Castle wall, and crep't on his hands and knees to his Lordship, where he found him with the mattress and feather-bed under him, and the bed-clothes over him ; and then this informant turning himself back again, his Lordship gott on his back, and this informant crep't back in the same manner he went there, and so brought his Lordship entirely off the wall, and carried him into the Gard-roome, in which time the garrison was all gott up, and candles were lighted ; and this informant, borrowing some of the soldiers' clothes, went with them up and down the Castle to see for his Lordship's lady, mother, and sisters, and then found that the Castle was blown up, and the dowager lady dead in her bed, being posted on the head with a great stone which then lay on her ; and in the next apartment they found his Lordship's two sisters both alive in bed, but almost suffocated with a beam of the house fallen in betwix't them, and, taking them out, carried them to his Lordship in the Gard-roome ; and returning again to the ruins, this informant heard something make a noise under his feet, and it being, as this informant apprehended, just about the place where, by the falling of the buildings, the Lady Hatton (who had just laid in) must be, he said to the Captain, 'I hear something under me ; so pray, digg here, and see if 'tis not my lady ;' and on digging about a foot and a half struck on a beam, by the side of which being a little

cavity, they open'd it somewhat larger, and, looking in, there saw under the beam (which did not rest flatt, but stood with one end considerably lower than the other), Miss Anne Hatton, his said Lordship's daughter, a child three years old the October before (now Countess of Nottingham), and taking her out of the bed and carrying her down to her father, return'd again to the ruins, and searching further in that cavity, found in another bed there one of the nurses dead, with Miss Margaret Hatton, another of his Lordship's daughters, a child of about one year and a half old in her arms, playing with a little silver cupp in its hand, and carried that to his Lordship, and returning again to the same place, and removing a little more of the rubbish, and a few boards, found in a cradle Elizabeth Hatton, another daughter of his Lordship, a child of about three weeks old, and carried that to his Lordship.

"The day now coming on, they dugg further in the ruins, and tooke out two or three women servants alive, one of which had a great quantity of glass in her back, which was pick'd out by the surgeons, and the rest of them were found dead, and some of them with their bones broak; and at last, on digging, they found the Lady Hatton, who was on her knees, with a wrapping-gown on, and her woman with her in the same posture, but they were both dead.

"The Castle was at this time entirely blown up, or, at least, what was not entirely blown up was shatter'd, which was occasion'd, as this informant has several times heard the said Lord Hatton declare, by lightning setting fire to two hundred and fifty barrels of gunpowder which was at that time in the store roome under the castle; and particularly about a week after the accident, some gentlemen of the island being come to condole with his

Lordship on this his great misfortune, and asking his Lordship whether he knew anything how it began? His Lordship declar'd (this informant being present), 'That he did not sleep from the time he went to bed till the Castle was blown up ; and that soon after he was in bed, he heard it thunder, as at a distance, and that it still came nearer and nearer, the wind growing high, and some hale beat against the windows pretty hard, and at last he felt the bed whereon he lay move, and immediately a prodigious burst, and at the same time found himself in the open air, by which he apprehended that the lightning had taken hold of the gunpowder, and that *that* had blown up the house, but did not apprehend that his bed had been carryed out of the house, but only thought that he had fallen with it, but some very large flashes of lightning immediately following, he did, on raising himself up by the light thereof, perceive the sea on one side of him, and part of the Castle wall on the other, and therefore kept calling out for help, till this informant spok to him.'"

Taken from Mr Chapple's own mouth, twentieth of March, seventeen hundred and twenty-seven, by me,

JOSHUA LANKART.



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